Toward the 21st Century:
New Directions for Canada's National Museums

En vue du 21e siècle:
Orientation nouvelle des musées nationaux du Canada

edited by / publié par Leslie H. Tepper

Canadian Museum
of Civilization
Mercury Series
Directorate
Paper No. 5

Musée canadien
des civilisations
Collection Mercure
Bureau du directeur
Dossier n° 5

©Canadian Museum of Civilization 1989
©Musée canadien des civilisations

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

En vue du 21e siècle: orientation nouvelle des musées nationaux du Canada = Toward the 21st century: new directions for Canada's National Museums

(Collection Mercure = Mercury series)
(Bureau du directeur, dossier = Musée canadien des civilisations = Directorate paper = Canadian Museum of Civilization; no. 5)
Text in French and English.
ISBN 0-660-50292-5

1. National Museums of Canada — Management.
2. National Museums of Canada — Reorganization.
3. Museums — Government policy — Canada.
4. Museum techniques. I. Tepper, Leslie Heyman, 1947- . II. Canadian Museum of Civilization. III. Title: Toward the 21st century, new directions for Canada's National Museums. IV. Series: Collection Mercure. V. Series: Bureau du directeur, dossier (Canadian Museum of Civilization); no. 5.

AM21.A2E57 1989 069'.0971 C89-097097-1E

Données de catalogage avant publication (Canada)

Vedette principale au titre:

En vue du 21e siècle: orientation nouvelle des musées nationaux du Canada = Toward the 21st century: new directions for Canada's National Museums

(Collection Mercure = Mercury series)
(Bureau du directeur, dossier = Musée canadien des civilisations = Directorate paper = Canadian Museum of Civilization; no. 5)
Texte en français et en anglais.
ISBN 0-660-50292-5

1. Musées nationaux du Canada — Gestion. 2. Musées nationaux du Canada — Réorganisation. 3. Musées — Politique gouvernementale — Canada. 4. Muséologie. I. Tepper, Leslie Heyman, 1947- . II. Musée canadien des civilisations. III. Titre: Orientation nouvelle des musées nationaux. IV Titre: Toward the 21st century, new directions for Canada's National Museums. V. Collection: Bureau du directeur, dossier (Musée canadien des civilisations); no 5.

AM21.A2E57 1989 069'.0971 C89-097097-1F

Printed and bound in Canada

Published by
Canadian Museum of Civilization
100 Laurier Street
P.O. Box 3100, Station "B"
Hull, Quebec
J8X 4H2

Imprimé et relié au Canada

Publié par
Musée canadien des civilisations
100, rue Laurier
C.P. 3100, Succursale "B"
Hull (Québec)
J8X 4H2

OBJECT OF THE MERCURY SERIES

The Mercury Series is designed to permit the rapid dissemination of information pertaining to the disciplines in which the Canadian Museum of Civilization is active. Considered an important reference by the scientific community, the Mercury Series comprises over three hundred specialized publications on Canada's history and prehistory.

Because of its specialized audience, the series consists largely of monographs published in the language of the author.

In the interest of making information available quickly, normal production procedures have been abbreviated. As a result, grammatical and typographical errors may occur. Your indulgence is requested.

Titles in the Mercury Series can be obtained by writing to the:

Mail Order Services
Publishing Division
Canadian Museum of Civilization
100 Laurier Street
P.O. Box 3100, Station "B"
Hull, Quebec
J8X 4H2

(613) 957-9905

BUT DE LA COLLECTION MERCURE

La collection Mercure vise à diffuser rapidement le résultat de travaux dans les disciplines qui relèvent des sphères d'activités du Musée canadien des civilisations. Considérée comme un apport important dans la communauté scientifique, la collection Mercure présente plus de trois cents publications spécialisées portant sur l'héritage canadien préhistorique et historique.

Comme la collection s'adresse à un public spécialisé celle-ci est constituée essentiellement de monographies publiées dans la langue des auteurs.

Pour assurer la prompte distribution des exemplaires imprimés, les étapes de l'édition ont été abrégées. En conséquence, certaines coquilles ou fautes de grammaire peuvent subsister: c'est pourquoi nous réclamons votre indulgence.

Vous pouvez vous procurer la liste des titres parus dans la collection Mercure en écrivant au:

Service des commandes postales
Division de l'édition
Musée canadien des civilisations
100, rue Laurier
C.P. 3100, Succursale "B"
Hull (Québec)
J8X 4H2

(613) 957-9905

Canada

90-04487/2

Abstract

New directions in museum programming are presented in thirteen papers representing a variety of perspectives. Originating as a lecture series, co-sponsored by the four national museums and Carleton University, augmented by additional papers, this volume places on public record the debates and visions which are guiding the transformation of Canada's national museums in preparation for the 21st century.

Résumé

Treize exposés illustrent les divers points de vue qui ont contribué à donner une orientation nouvelle à la programmation des musées. L'ouvrage présente les opinions exprimées lors de conférences commanditées par les quatre musées nationaux et l'université Carleton ainsi qu'une série d'autres exposés sur le sujet. Il constitue un rapport des débats et une description des visions qui ont inspiré le changement d'orientation des musées nationaux du Canada à l'approche du XXI^{e} siècle.

CONTENTS

Introduction
Leslie H. Tepper..... vi

SECTION ONE: THE BACKGROUND

Our National Museums: Present and Future.
The Honourable Flora MacDonald..... 2

Museums and the Canadian Community:
A Historical Perspective.
D.A. Muise..... 10

SECTION TWO: THE VISION

Crossroads of Cultures:
The New Canadian Museum of Civilization.
George F. MacDonald..... 30

Bringing Science and Technology to Canadians
Through a Living Place: The National Museum
of Science and Technology.
J. Wm. McGowan..... 41

A Future In The Past:
The National Gallery of Canada.
Gyde Shepherd..... 51

Describing the Origins of Everything with Examples:
The National Museum of Natural Sciences.
Alan R. Emery..... 62

SECTION THREE: CASE STUDIES

Le mandat national des Services éducatifs du Musée des beaux-arts du canada: 1988-1998.
Michel V. Cheff..... 81

Interpretation: New Directions for the Canadian Museum of Civilization.
Lorna Kee..... 92

Entre la tour de babel et le cheval de troie.
Paul Carpentier..... 104

Counter-Revolution in Curatorship: The National Museum of Science and Technology's Return to Curatorial Basics in the 90's.
Geoff Rider..... 113

SECTION FOUR: COMMENTARY

View From the Museum Community.
William J. Withrow..... 127

Les musées au quebec: un point de vue.
Jean Trudel..... 139

Reading the National Museums: Museums As Cultural Contexts.
Jeanne Cannizzo..... 155

REFERENCES..... 174

INTRODUCTION

The approach of the 21st century has been both a catalyst and touchstone for the extraordinary changes that have recently taken place in Canada's national museum community. Canada, with an increasing self-awareness of a unique identity, has begun to focus on the cultural heritage housed in its national museums. In the past few years, both intellectual and monetary resources have been dedicated to constructing new buildings, writing legislation for a new national Museums Act and finding new approaches to traditional museum functions. The content of these discussions and debates in the museum community is as important to the final institutions as the new buildings that will house them.

This volume offers museum professionals and the general public access to the concepts and constraints which have guided the changes in the national museums. While the country could follow the construction of magnificent buildings through newspaper photographs and the media, the conceptual apparatus which structures innovative programs and planning was not as visible. Therefore, a multi-part project was proposed to increase public involvement and, simultaneously, create a record of change. The four national museums and Carleton University's School of Continuing Education and Institute of Canadian Studies acted as co-sponsors of the project.

Initially a series of free public lecture series was offered in the fall of 1987 at Carleton University. The lectures were taped, then edited and the videotapes made available for purchase by individuals or institutions. To reach a wider audience, the lecture series was twice broadcast on Carleton University's Instructional Television Channel. The edited volume is the final component of the project. Several of the papers are reproduced as originally presented in the lecture series, others have been modified and edited by the authors for publication. Four of the essays were written specifically for the book.

This volume presents the changing museum scene from a series of perspectives. In section one, the national museums are placed in the wider context of both a contemporary and historical setting and in relation to government policy. In the following section, essays by the three national museum Directors and the Assistant Director of the National Gallery offer their visions of new directions for their respective institutions. Four case studies offer more detail on specific programs and reflections on the changing activities of the curator and interpreter. Finally in the

section titled Commentary, views and perspectives are offered on the changing roles of the national and regional museum communities.

The concepts and constraints recorded in these pages served to shape Canada's national museums. There are still many voices to be heard and more documents to be published as museums move to answer the challenges of the next century.

Leslie H. Tepper
Project Convenor/Editor

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the contributors and sponsoring institutions for their cooperation in bringing this complex venture to completion. The constant encouragement and financial support offered by Dr. George MacDonald, Director, Canadian Museum of Civilization and by Dr. Tom Wilkinson, Director of Carleton University's School of Continuing Education, is especially appreciated.

Section One:

THE BACKGROUND

OUR NATIONAL MUSEUMS: PRESENT AND FUTURE

Flora MacDonald
Minister of Communications
M.P. for Kingston and the Islands

As Canadians, we seem to be fascinated by the relationship between our past and present. Perhaps it is because we are a nation of immigrants that we seem to turn with extraordinary frequency to those institutions helping to conserve and interpret our memories and past experiences. Museums, art galleries, nature parks, historic sites, archives: there are now nearly 2,000 heritage institutions and parks in Canada, visited well over 90 million times a year.

Every Federal Government since Confederation has, to a greater or lesser extent, accepted its share of the responsibility for establishing and maintaining our heritage institutions. In fact, almost half of those 90 million visits are to federally administered institutions. Of these, the Department of Communications is, of course, very intimately involved with, and responsible for, museums. Overseas visitors may even be puzzled as to why the mandate of our Department of Communications is so broad, why it is responsible for radar research and assistance to the arts, for spectrum management and museums. To Canadians it seems perfectly natural, living as we do in a country brought together as a triumph of imagination, the triumph of communications over geography.

From the outset of our history we have been <u>forced</u> by our vast spaces and small, scattered population to communicate. We have been forced by our circumstances to develop both the art and the technology of communications to the point where we now have an inbred, natural talent for it. Our vast distances and small population have demanded that we keep in touch with one another.

We <u>have</u> kept in touch, and we have told each other about ourselves. The Annapolis Valley farmer and the Alberta oil-rig operator do communicate. In fostering and developing the technology for this communication, the thrust of government policy has enabled us to develop and expand our culture to all parts of our country. We have been pioneers in communications, as we still are. Not satisfied with just one miracle of engineering--a transcontinental railway--we built two. In telecommunications, aviation, national broadcasting, we are leaders. To paraphrase Descartes, "We communicate, therefore we are."

More than anything else it is the country itself which has shaped our culture. Joe Clark's revealing phrase is "the winter half of North America"--an echo of Gilles Vigneault's "Mon pays, c'est l'hiver." I cannot emphasize sufficiently how important this fact is. It has stamped us as a people, our style, our selves, our culture. It determines the things we do, the way we think, the way we create. It is why we have the world's greatest wilderness parks, why the new Museum of Civilization reflects in its forms our rivers and hills. It is why even our Canadian music is resonant with echoes of great space.

This continual conquest of space, this continual reaching out across it, is the motivating factor for much of our culture. It can even be said to be the factor behind the creation of our national broadcasting system. The cultural activities that provide us with the essence of whatever it means to be a Canadian are also an expression of this underlying outreach. We are both reflected and created in our poetry, novels, drama and dance. As part of this matrix of creativity, art galleries and museums are our image banks, holding objects on our behalf which become infused with particular meaning for each of us. Taken together, these images become our shared memory, and therefore become essential to every one of us. Where else, for example, could the unique style of the Group of Seven have developed? Museums and art galleries are integral aspects of Canada's culture, helping to define us and eventually defining the country itself.

A National Museums Policy: The First Decision

That is why this government has taken great care to treat cultural matters with special seriousness, recognizing what we have in this country is something special, something unique, reflecting the way in which people, bringing their own cultures, have adapted to it and been shaped by it.

We in government are sensitive to the qualitative dimension of cultural activities. We listen and constantly take note of representations from organizations and individuals. I think it is obvious by now that such submissions from public organizations and reports from the various recent task forces do not go unheeded. I was particularly interested in the report of the Richard-Withrow Task Force on federal museums policy, since I had been quite aware that changes in the National Museums Corporation had become necessary. In fact, when I assumed this portfolio, I was soon faced with the question of whether the structure of the National Museums Corporation and the provisions of the 1968 National Museums Act were adequate to guide our federal museums into the 21st century. I decided that they were not.

4 Toward the 21st Century

If the federal museums were to meet the challenges of the 1990s, and beyond, it was clear to me that action was needed, for three reasons. How do we carry forward this unique culture, fashioned as it is by land and people sharing? How do we carry this forward into our museum policy, sharing the benefits of our great institutions throughout the country? Although, according to an Omnibus Research nationwide survey last year, 57 per cent of Canadians have visited Ottawa at least once in their lifetimes, it is nevertheless vital that Canadians in smaller communities have an opportunity to share this essential element of our national heritage.

The new buildings for the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Civilization will, of course, allow additional holdings to be exhibited. But more of our national collection ought to be made accessible across Canada. The four national museums also need the freedom for each to develop its special strengths individually. With a stronger sense of individual identity, each museum would acquire clearer recognition of its own appropriate mission. A stronger individual mandate could also encourage greater collaboration with the private sector and with provincial and local institutions; and allow museums to devise individual revenue-generating plans. The national museums had to be encouraged to exercise greater freedom in devising the means to fulfil their missions. For example, more flexibility in budget and personnel planning could allow for more rapid adjustment to the needs of changing audiences.

These three broad principles--greater accessibility, a stronger sense of mission, and more individual flexibility in planning--were the foundations for the decisions whose necessity became obvious. To begin with, the Government decided to phase out the National Museums Corporation. It had served its time, and that time was now past.

Furthermore, in dismantling the Corporation the idea was that the removal of an extra layer of bureaucracy would help allow creative juices to flow. In a period when Canadian culture is flourishing as never before in all fields--film, dance, museology--we wanted to let that growth proceed unfettered. The four major national museums can quite rapidly become capable of standing alone, to be established by legislation as separate, autonomous institutions, each reporting through a Board of Trustees to the Minister of Communications. In so doing, it was critical that we look at the national programmes which had been administered by the Corporation.

The Canadian Conservation Institute, the Canadian Heritage Information Network and the Museum Assistance Programmes all perform most useful services, and I have been impressed by the strong view of the Canadian museums community that these programmes

be continued. Rather than create yet another government agency, it was decided that they should be integrated into the Department of Communications, to join the national cultural programmes already in place in the Department. I have had the opportunity to meet with these employees on several occasions. Their wealth of knowledge and their devotion to their work make them, in themselves, persons of intrinsic cultural value. I have been equally impressed by the vitality and dynamism that these employees have brought to the Department of Communications.

Obviously we are in a transition period. Obviously changes are taking place. But already one can sense a new excitement at the Department, already the kind of artistic and creative work done in, for example, the Museum Assistance Programme, is having an impact on our other activities. Of course there has been some sense of dislocation, but I am quite frankly impressed by the number of these employees who have told me that the transition is going well. The Museum Assistance Programme will be taking the lead in providing more varied and better services to remote communities across Canada. This is as it should be because this is where we started: communities in one part of the country sharing with others.

I have tried to deal with changes in the big museums here in Ottawa first. Our focus of attention is now centred on what is happening in museums across the country. A discussion paper will shortly be presented by my Department. It will form the basis for consultation with the whole museum community and the provincial and territorial governments. I intend these consultations to lead to a cabinet presentation; the new policy and programmes will then follow directly. The development of the new policy is, and must be, a co-operative venture, not a policy visitation from on high.

On the federal side, we are flexible and open to ideas and concepts of what might be needed. We depend on the full participation of museums at all levels, so that our final recommendations to Cabinet may be as comprehensive as possible.

Questions for a National Policy for Museums

In considering some of the complex issues to be resolved, please bear with me while I make an arbitrary distinction between a national policy for museums and a policy for the four national museums based here in Ottawa.

To take the larger area first, a national policy for museums implies a full reassessment of the Federal Government's present and potential roles in all facets of museum activities. It goes almost without saying that there are some things the federal government must do, such as promoting international exchanges and

interprovincial and territorial relationships, and maintaining the four national museums. There are also some things that it does best, or at least better than others, such as ensuring national conservation efforts through the Canadian Conservation Institute and sustaining the Canada-wide data bases of the Canadian Heritage Information Network.

As an active partner in the Canadian museum community, then, the Federal Government has both a direct role and a supplemental one, and it can also be a facilitator and an advisor.

It is necessary to distinguish among these various roles, for the first major question to be faced in the policy review is not "How should the federal government act?" Instead, we should be asking, "How can Canadians best be served?" Part of the answer lies in the Federal Government's recognition of its responsibility to aid the safeguarding and sharing of Canada's cultural treasures for the use of, and on behalf of, the people of Canada, now and in the future. But deciding how such aid should be directed is more difficult and complex. A balance must be found between aid aimed at enhancing the capability of museums to perform their traditional functions in serving the community at large, and the necessary support for the four national museums on the other hand. The relationship among the various museum activities and the existing cultural programmes in the department, including the Moveable Cultural Property Secretariat, the Insurance Programme for Travelling Exhibitions and the Cultural Initiatives Programme will still have to be clarified and defined.

A preliminary survey indicates that 131 museum and non-museum heritage programmes now exist within 48 separate departments, agencies and Crown corporations, from the Collection of Weights and Measures in Consumer and Corporate Affairs to the Inuit and Indian Art Collection held by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; from the National Air Photo Library to the National Collection of Invertebrate and Plant Fossils. A coherent federal policy must provide a framework within which specifically museum-related elements of these unquestionably worthwhile activities can be fostered.

In a similar vein, a national policy for museums should acknowledge the abilities of other government departments and agencies that for their own valid reasons have initiated museum or museum-like activities. An approach here is clearly not one of control but of recognition and consideration of these valid initiatives as part of our review. Tax issues, for example; research funding by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; information from Statistics Canada; employment possibilities through Employment and Immigration; tourism; various programmes administered by the Secretary of State and the

Department of External Affairs: all these and others touch on areas of great interest to museums throughout Canada.

Technological changes will affect museums in ways which can hardly as yet be fully realized. At the Carrefour of the recent Francophone Summit in Quebec, for instance, examples were shown of the possibilities of interaction between visitors and museum objects. Technology forces now go beyond holography (important as that is likely to be), beyond the ability of a archaeologist at Dalhousie to work with bones at a dig in Inuvik. Today, technology can expand the horizons of creativity itself, and the very horizons of the mind.

Technological opportunities, museological career planning, the balance struck among numerous competing functional demands such as conservation and acquisitions, and imaginative allowance for the inevitable growth of the next 20 years--all these have to be considered. And most importantly, from the viewpoint of museums, what does the community see to be major national challenges, now and in the future, which ought to be addressed by the policy? I have tried to indicate very briefly the necessary breadth and scope of such a new policy process. But now I would like to turn to issues in a policy for the national museums, that is, specifically for the four great establishments.

The National Museums: Future Visions

I know that the coming years are going to be exciting ones for the four national museums, and not just because of the new buildings, or plans for others. I expect to see a new sense of national leadership growing among our flagship museums, as their place within the Canadian museums community is consolidated.

Apart from their traditional activities which they do splendidly, we have to determine how to make these four national museums less of an Ottawa-based conglomerate and make sure that they are, as they should be, something that belongs to the nation. Every Canadian must be made to feel that the National Gallery for example, belongs to him or her.

Among the major issues which we will have to address, the question of access recurs most frequently, and in several forms. Of these, geographic access is the most obvious. But it forces us nevertheless to examine some primary assumptions about museums. It is not enough to state that outreach is by definition desirable, without being reasonably certain what smaller and under-served communities actually want from a national museum.
At the same time, rapid advances in communication technology may, in the long run, make the issue less critical, because an exhibit

might be broadcast anywhere by satellite, or mounted through holographic images.

Another question of access arises from the matter of storage, and the unseen treasures of our national museums. The National Gallery of Canada has over 40,000 works of art, already being moved to their new quarters. The National Museum of Science and Technology houses more than 55,000 objects, and as many photographs. The Canadian Museum of Civilization contains well over three million artifacts. And the National Museum of Natural Sciences has collected no less than five million specimens. Obviously, only a small part of our national collections can be shown at once, even with the new buildings. Can parts of these collections be made available to other institutions, or for that matter, is this desirable?

Still another question of access is more subtle. We all know, for example, that the demographic complexion of our population is changing, in relatively predictable ways. Canada's population is gradually aging; education levels are slowly rising; and so forth. What is not wholly clear is the correlation between the museum going public and those demographic breakdowns. For instance, some statistics suggest that persons with a higher level of education are more likely to visit museums than those with less formal schooling. Does this mean that the national museums should emphasize programmes and exhibits for people who might normally go to art galleries and museums in any case, or should we design exhibits to attract those who currently are less likely to attend? Clearly, a balance can be established, but the issue raises questions about targeting our audiences in the future, when the nature of the audience changes.

A second broad area of concern centres in the kind of museums we want in the National Capital Area. As I mentioned earlier, recent studies show that fully half of all Canadians, from all regions, will visit Ottawa-Hull at least once in their lifetimes. This fact has definite implications for future planning. Does it mean, for example, that the national museums should focus their acquisitions, programmes and exhibits on subjects of entirely national relevance, which cannot be seen elsewhere in the same scope or intensity?

The issue of whether all four national museums should emphasize Canadian subjects is surely non-controversial. Yet it occasionally surfaces in discussions about "parochialism" and "internationalism." Canada's heritage, of course, is part of world heritage, just as in a sense the world is ours. The issue is again one of balance, and how to find an appropriate balance.
A related concern is the role of the national museums as part of the National Capital Region, and their relations to the local communities. Economically, they present highly desirable tourist

destinations, but the nature of their local residency, so to speak, has yet to be worked out. Throughout these and many other questions run two common elements: the primacy of the audience and the potential influence of new technologies in all aspects of museum life. I have little doubt that these will prove to be preoccupations during the next decades. Yet neither speaks directly about the foundations of our national museums.

We think of them as national not because of their size, but because of their authority. Without it, every corner store could call itself a museum of contemporary civilization; every used car lot, a museum of Science and Technology; every teenager's collection of rock posters an art gallery. Perhaps they are in their own way. But they still lack the essence of a museum: authority. That ingredient is at the root of our conception of a museum.

The National Gallery in 1950 had a total staff of four and its entire annual budget was $177,500. But when I visited it, I knew that I was in a real art gallery, and a real museum. They had, and have in their modern versions, that authority which comes from research, from a firm understanding of their mission to educate, and from their ability to give great enjoyment.

Museums, we know, are important to us for allowing us to understand the creations of technology, the genius of art, past ways of life, the principles of science and the inter-related phenomena of our natural world. We need them to understand the world, our dreams and ourselves. Most museum goers have probably felt the sense of possessing an object on display, of feeling that it is somehow one's own, a public symbol infused with a private meaning. It is the enchanting privacy of the experience which leads to inspiration and enrichment: the unique place of the museum, through research, to help us educate ourselves by enjoyment. No other place can do it the same way.

And despite all the issues to be resolved, despite current problems and challenges, it is safe to say that this is the best of times for Canada's museums. They have greater status, popularity, authority, reputation, skills--and yes, even money--than ever before. With scientific accomplishments in conservation and technology, with our superb, ever-growing collections, our museums can face the 21st century with confidence and sober enthusiasm.

MUSEUMS AND THE CANADIAN COMMUNITY: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

D.A. Muise
Department of History, Carleton University

Museums come in many shapes and sizes, but each emerged from a specific historical experience. By various counts there are upwards of 2,000 museum or museum-like institutions across the country, ranging from the small one-room display cases run on a piecemeal or voluntary basis to monoliths associated with the National Museums of Canada or the various provincial complexes that have so mushroomed over the past decades. Any attempt to generalize about their role in the Canadian community is problematic. All are different; yet all share common goals and relationships to patrons and clients. On the whole though, relationships between government policy and heritage are hardly confined to one type of museum. The tradition of separating the various disciplines amongst distinct institutions was not much done before the middle of this century anyway.

Ottawa's present contribution to museum functions is buoyed up to some extent by the enormous investments in new national facilities, but this should not blind us to the reality that funds available for programming have shrunk. But aggregate statistics seldom reveal the breakdown between operational funds, capital expenditures and research or curatorial functions. At all levels the general impression is that the former two eat up money as it become available, while curatorial/conservation expenditures become increasingly demanding because of pressure on collections as a result of increased exhibition activity. Everywhere the complaint is laid that research curatorship suffers in the rush to service public programming or to respond to imperatives of politically arrived at priorities.[1] While that may not be as serious an issue as curators and other museum professionals make out, the question of government's relationship to heritage is at the core of present concerns.

Instead of dealing with this contemporary issue in a vacuum, my objective is to contextualize our museum experience from the perspective of Canadian social history and make a few passing observations on the ways our museums reflect the societies in which they are imbedded. We think of heritage institutions as being rooted within the lived experience of communities. Yet our definitions of community are grounded on quite narrowly conceived relationships between the stake-holders within the system. In reality, there has been quite a lot of change over time in that outlook. Where possible in what follows, I will attempt to situate

the experience of museums in Canada within the broader framework of heritage-culture and arts policies as well as relate it to broad trends within our national history.

We might do well to look briefly at the basic players in the museum system, for it is in the changing relationships among them that the dynamics moving the system emerge. By definition, museums are still seen as institutions--usually associated with buildings--for gathering, storing, studying and exhibiting objects. The Minister of Communications, Flora MacDonald, in her contribution to this volume, says it best and most eloquently when summing up her notion of the role of museums with the single word "authority"--by which she seemed to imply that museums' essential function is to distinguish the real or authentic from the fake. Following on that theme was the notion that museums infuse public symbols with private meaning. I suppose there could not be a much clearer presentation of the more narrow definition that society and, by association, governments impose upon museums, and which museums quite often accept as their central role; even if as validators of the collecting instincts of those groups most concerned with maintaining the centrality of material processions they seldom challenge the reciprocal self-interest of both curators and sponsors.

For our purposes, though, it might be wise to keep an ideal type structure in mind when discussing the museum phenomenon. At the core of any such attempt must rest institutions themselves, with all of their physical trappings and collections, whose relationships to their communities are determined by origins and mandates imbedded in historical realities. Generally, the issue revolved around relationships between museum bureaucracies, their sponsors and the communities they hoped to serve. In this context we must examine the evolution of relationships between museums, bureaucracies and power structures.

The relationship between institutions and their sponsors tends to be a central issue of focus for current discussion of patron-client relations. Government policy is characterized by various relationships, with a variety of implications. At one end of the spectrum are totally independent museums, privately established through some sort of philanthropy or small enough to exist and function without any relationship to a publicly responsible funding system. Very few such institutions exist in Canada; though some which later became significant public institutions came into existence as a result of some form of private philanthropy or the ego of an individual wanting to memorialize his or her achievements. At the other end of the spectrum lie completely publicly supported institutions, which exist at all levels in Canada.

In the arts generally there is a commonly accepted spectrum of such relationships accepted in the literature on cultural politics--even though the terminology may vary from time to time and in different situations.[2] The following typology helps a bit in considering the scope of development along that spectrum:

1) Facilitating: A situation in which government funding agencies allow private sector domination of both policy-making and programming for their institutions, providing support on a peer-evaluation basis through various committees and boards of trustees.

2) Paternalistic: A situation where government funding agencies assume direct responsibility for establishing and implementing policies but keep some sort of hands-off relationship through the intermediation of boards of trustees or similar agencies.

3) Architectural: A situation in which government policy is essentially directional and interventionist. By controlling the flow and terms of funds available to institutions, bureaucrats and politicians direct policies and programmes of host institutions in response to a set of objectives determined as part of a political process--though implementation of such programmes can rest with the semi-autonomous institutions.

4) Engineered: A situation in which the state--at various levels--owns and controls directly all instruments and engineers of the system to fulfil politically arrived at objectives.

All four types of relationships exist in Canada today, though for most of their history our museums have been characterized by another type altogether--a sort of benign neglect, in which institutions were permitted to moulder in obscurity, free from interference by politicians, but also free of enabling finances or any set of objectives that would have allowed them to become effective social agents with some sort of role beyond their four walls.

This schema for looking at museum-patron relationships is problematic from a variety of perspectives; by focusing on funding as the critical conjuncture, the central question of freedom of expression is distorted. This part of the curatorial administrative paradigm can be fraught with ethical problems of great consequence. The essential tension inside the museum system is often just a matter of deciding what will be done with existing materials and possibilities--that is, how scholars and other professionals will perform their self-appropriated tasks. In the history of Canadian museums this question of agency is seldom broached. Up through the 1960s it was left pretty much up to the curators themselves with hardly any sort of interest expressed in public functions inside museums. Since that time, though, the political process has intervened to change the whole structure--the tyranny of the curator being replaced to some extent by the tyranny of the public programmer or the medium of exhibition.

Absent from consideration in the internal dynamic of museums is any consideration of the place of the ultimate sponsor of just about all current museum activities, the tax-paying public, who tend to be seen as consumers of the end-product of museum activity rather than having any role in defining the museum 's purpose. Instead, a new set of paradigms is evolving in the museum world, revolving around relationships between increasingly professional and bureaucratized sets of players, whose policy determinations generally deny any role for the public, except as represented by the political masters who generate policy. Over the past two decades increasing attention has been paid to the tension between the museum establishment--operating on a badly dated set of fundamental priorities--and a political process which has intruded onto the scene as the levels of public funds has increased.

Within these discussion, little room is left for any social responsibility that museums might possibly assume. Instead, institutions are forced to respond to agendas set by a political process rather than ones set by some sort of internal dynamic within the profession. Beyond their obvious mission of salvaging as much of the past as seems reasonable, museums position themselves as mirrors into the past, that is, offering Canadians an opportunity to become better people by contemplating their material roots. We seldom consider what distortions appear in the image as a result of the relationship those who hold the mirror have to their collections or to their supposed audiences.

Historically, museums have been seen as preserved for the eccentric elements of the middle classes--one is tempted to say a plaything for dilettantes with the means and inclination to indulge class-derived notions of truth and beauty. By giving these notions an institutional cachet and surrounding them with an almost mystical sense of mission, early museologists invoked the support of the state to validate their depiction of what was worthy to be preserved from the past. Particularly articulate groups had, in fact, appropriated convenient portions of the past for their own purposes, often distorting depictions of reality to suit their own needs. This was achieved not so much through overt emphasis as through a natural class bias in the selection of those aspects of the past to emphasize.

On the whole, early museum development related only peripherally to concerns of the general population. There was, though, a gradual accretion of both institutions and consciousness throughout the latter third of the century. The fact that our museums emerged from a combination of government intervention and a middle class desire to find some popular education system for the bulk of non-educated community is a familiar tale, generally linked to the Mechanics' Institutes and other institutions which housed those floral, faunal and mineral collections that so dominated early museums. Scientific method and the utility of applied

information was held sacrosanct. The same social forces were also reforming the education system to develop an ideal of social responsibility and control.[3]

Confederation in 1867 and the waves of nationalism that swept over the latter third of the 19th century were political and economic expressions that spilt over into the world of heritage only marginally. Toward the turn of the century, museums emerged as symbols of maturity within the expanded notion of self characteristic of the idea that Canada would be the nation of the 20th century. Construction of Ottawa's Victoria Memorial Museum and Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum at the beginning of "Canada's Century" were paralleled by similar developments, though less grand in scale, in most of the settled provinces.[4] Basically, Canadians replicated the commonplace institutions of more mature European and American communities, as well as their monumental architecture when they could afford it. Determination to become part of a world museum scene made for an imitative rather than innovative approach to capturing the past. Most larger museums swallowed the gospel of science while smaller institutions were more likely to remain the preserve of the eccentric or exotic. The former were bent upon discovery in a widening field of enquiry; the latter with embellishing exotic materials from a wider spectrum of human experience with some sort of social/cultural meaning relevant to their community experience. The fact that the two would find common ground in some aspects of anthropology should not surprise us too much. A gradual increase of interest in the human rather than the natural world was unevenly expressed, mostly preoccupied with classifying the physical remains of supposedly endangered cultures indigenous to North America.[5]

Two central notions informed discovery and preservation of information embedded in the material remains of human habitation. One was fear of loss through negligence, especially as Canadian's interest was stimulated by the curiosity shown in material cultures and traditions of native peoples by both American and European anthropologists. The second spur evolved from a sense of patriotism that placed a higher premium than before on Canadian's lived experience. Much of that impetus came from a wish to imitate the experience of Americans, who went through a paroxysm of patriotic fervour in celebrating the centennial of their independence during the 1870s and 1880s that would lead to a new outburst of nationalism and give museums their first new mission--the reflection of the integrity of the nation.[6] Such notions did not immediately have an impact on the Canadian scene, though they would become current some time later.

Whatever the stimulus, the period between the 1880s and World War I marked emergence of a significant Canadian museum community. Still fragmented and unorganized, its accomplishments were great. Institutions were put in place and scientists made their mark on

the Canadian and, in some cases, the international stage. But the system's preoccupations remained pretty narrowly defined. In some measure it was a blend between government's concern to be seen supporting advancement of scientific knowledge and Canadian preparedness to imitate institutional expressions of dominant European and American cultures, but seldom the financial commitment needed to make them effective institutions. Where there was a concern for the Canadian experience, it was confined generally to the pre-historical period or to salvaging material remnants of Amer-Indian cultures expected to disappear as a consequence of the on-rush of modernity, a process to which the museum's sponsoring department was directly tied.[7]

At the same time national institutions were evolving an approach to preserving national treasures--however ill defined that notion--a concurrent evolution of local and regional museums occurred, some of which had been in the field from before Confederation even. These local institutions seldom troubled with defining what they were about. Instead, they reflected the concern of local elites with preserving their communities' collective memories. They seldom achieved high levels of museological certainty. Instead, they were treasure chests, collective dominated by the enlightened interest of those alarmed by the threat to their secure position on top of the social heap from rapid industrialization and urbanization. The pioneer experience, the contributions of founding fathers and "cabinets of curiosities" tended to dominate their consciousness--never the real implications of contemporary events. It was a kind of nostalgia that looked to the past as a safe haven from the present rather than as a way of informing it.[8]

In all of these developments the museum community--if it can be defined as a community at all at that early stage--mirrored the tastes and preoccupations of those classes in a position to facilitate creation and operation of selective collective memory banks. While Canada has had little of the large-scale private philanthropy which characterized American museum development at the time, or the huge concentrations of inherited wealth and material culture that tended to surround the palaces of the European nobility, there was considerable interest in collecting and preserving remnants of the past within the limited scope of local and regional museums. There would be much more participation by private foundations later, but it would be some time in coming and more often was directed toward other types of institutions than museums.

During the inter-war years, museums' public functions changed subtly, as curatorship and education objectives challenged scholarship for the lead role in museum programming. Display techniques moved beyond the taxonomic preoccupations of glass cases to dioramas depicting the natural experience of past communities,

whether in nature or as a consequence of human action. To some extent, museums were responding to the challenge of "living museums" and historic sites type interpretations of pioneer experiences or early military establishments with animated dioramas. The emerging national parks system heightened awareness of heritage resources as part of a national patrimony, to be preserved and developed as resources for the future use of all Canadians.[9]

The depression years featured a sharp contraction in public expenditure in all areas. Holding the line offered little opportunity to use "make-work" projects in museum-related activities, as there was to some extent in the national parks system. Museums remained very much the preserve of the initiated few rather than making any opportunity for the general population to develop a new consciousness of their past. The depression years were hardly a time to introduce new ideas into such staid, class-bound institutions.[10]

World War II was not much better, except to re-emphasize the values being defended on European battlefields, while giving to the community another valiant heritage to commemorate. Indeed, the extent to which pre-1950s heritage, outside of the museum world, was dominated by commemoration of past military activities is amazing, when one considers the pride Canadians take in their un-military heritage.[11] All in all, the period up to the end of World War II did not expand museum's relationship to the community.

Following the war, all aspects of Canadian society came under re-evaluation and planning for an expansive and prosperous future. These evaluations spanned a wide spectrum of activities, from economic sectors to urban development. Culture was, for the first time, given some primary attention, mostly as a result of the lobbying of a variety of emerging interest groups. While museums were not central to the agitation, the broad field of heritage culture was included in the mandate of the landmark Massey/Levesque Royal Commission investigating the Arts, Letters and Sciences in Canada. Initiated in 1948, though only reporting in 1951, it dealt with the broadest range of cultural sectors.[12] In the field of museum-centred heritage, it condemned a long record of under-achievement, advocating a major restructuring of national heritage policies, including appointment of an independent Board of Trustees for the National Museum of Canada and the severing of its long-standing thraldom under the Geological Survey, a recommendation that would not be completed till passage of the National Museums Incorporation Act of 1968 founded the Corporation just now being dismembered.

Vincent Massey and his family were long-time supporters of Toronto's arts and culture endeavours. He was also fresh from a long period of immersion in Britain, where cultural agency was so

prominent in preserving the integrity of the nation in face of overwhelming attack.[13] Rev. G.L. Levesque was equally committed to the notion of heritage having a role in preserving and demonstrating national objectives, though his experience was much more rooted in the solidarity of French Canada and imbued with the ideology of survival.[14] A third member of the Commission, Professor Hilda Neatby of the University of Saskatchewan, was more preoccupied than other members with Canadian's illiteracy about their own history and argued in favour of a higher profile for history in the museum world, including championing a central recommendations of the commissions--creation of a museum of Canadian history.[15]

As in so many areas, the Royal Commission recommended more government involvement in financing heritage culture, especially in promoting understanding of the historical experience of our founding communities. There was a certain amount of nativist alarm that post-war Canada would not be much like earlier versions; and it was considered important that prior experiences be preserved. In addition, it was argued, rapid urbanization and renewed immigration posed a threat to traditional Anglo/Celtic values, which had to be reinforced if the nation was to survive the post-modern world. A reaffirmation of the democratic principles the war had been fought to defend combined with the alarm over "creeping communism" to create an atmosphere ripe for exploitation. Museums and heritage, in these circumstances, were seen as a source of national literacy, informing the general population about its roots. This departure constituted a major development in terms of Canadian cultural policy for it gave the federal government a role as agent it had never before aspired to; even though not much was to be done for the next decade or so, the implementation of the Commission's recommendations set the agenda for cultural politics in Canada for the future.[16]

While much of the '50s was spent ruminating over the Commission's recommendations, little real action was taken by the government. There was certainly no decisive attempt to increase available budgets for heritage activities, which continued to languish, both in terms of mandate and resources. Churning along in much the same way as before, our museums continued reflecting the preoccupations of their curators, who aped the social elites that had spawned most of them. Curiously enough, a minimal concern for Canadian history at the larger national and provincial museums continued to be the norm, this in spite of the Commission's strong recommendation for a national history museum. Quizzed in the early '60s about their perception of the role and mandate of museums, curators continued to emphasize the narrowly defined role of preservation and scientific work and ignored the educational and communication functions.[17] In effect, the system was both ill-equipped and unprepared to take on the roles prescribed for it by the Commissioners.

In the '50s Canada's museums fell substantially behind the universities in virtually every area of pure or applied research, pretty much as the Royal Commission had prescribed.[18] In addition, emergence of large research institutes in government departments and creation of the National Research Council usurped whatever research role museums aspired to, leaving them with only a curatorial role in the natural sciences and a skeletal staff in anthropology. Museums were in danger of becoming an anachronism, playing no decisive role in any identifiable community beyond their own four walls and distanced from scholarly advances throughout the academic community. In the history/heritage field, a decisive split occurred between museum professionals few in number and badly organized, and university-based scholars, who were advancing beyond their earlier preoccupations with the politics of nation building to a concern for social and cultural themes in Canadian history.

In spite of continuing official indifference, there were important stirring in the '50s. A public debate regarding the nature of cultural property caused consternation in some circles. Minor scuffles regarding political interference in artistic tastes and the spiralling costs of running and filling the National Art Gallery were the most visible issues, but probably the least important in the long run.[19] Underneath was a concern for heritage resources in shaping community consciousness. But it was difficult to separate performing and other arts from the heritage sectors. The debate broke down into a number of dimensions, especially as it became clear that political profit could be derived from investing in heritage as a way of dealing with community demands for more visible reminders of a rooted national experience.

The Diefenbaker era (1956-1964) witnessed considerable flowering in various cultural sectors. Working out the implications of the new Canada Council was important; for even though it had limited direct impact on heritage areas within the museum community, its introduction of a consultative process in all aspects of dominion-provincial relations opened the door for a changed relationship between federal and provincial institutions. There also emerged the "salvage"-inspired heritage preservation movement best typified by Ontario's Upper Canada Village, where a process of modernization--in that case the Saint Lawrence Seaway--threatened the integrity of long-established communities and provided an opportunity for regrouping heritage resources at a single site. While there has been considerable debate over the efficacy of such mega-projects, there can be little doubt that their impact on the heritage movement had important implications and links for tourism and education. Restoration of Fortress Louisbourg was another instance where direct intervention by politicians restructured the thinking regarding heritage resources. As with Upper Canada Village, heritage was given purpose apart from pure edification, transformed into a resource to be developed for

politically inspired employment and tourist-centred objectives. None of these outdoor projects had much to do directly with museums in the first instance, but their impact on the broad field of heritage soon spilled over with dramatic impact.

The approach of the centennial of Confederation in 1967 (and a variety of provincial centennials as well) really stirred the cultural heritage pot to a boil. Combined with an outpouring of nationalism and demonstrable pride with Expo 67's universal success, centennial celebrations outstripped everyone's imagining. The Centennial Commission turned 1967 into an opportunity to express pride in community achievements by targeting creation of suitable memorials to the nation's survival for 100 years as the most fundable projects. The bulk of federal commitment was directed to provincial and local governments, on a cost-sharing basis, for creation of much-needed new facilities of either a community nature for performing arts or for heritage institutions; Charlottetown's Confederation Centre presented the model of what was intended. There were all sorts of political reasons for federal government largesse toward heritage institutions in those heady days. It was, after all, a safe way of commemorating the centennial, but was also a commitment to the sort of future that government anticipated.

The building boom of the '60s, both in provincial capitals and at the local level, would be followed by a crisis of content and confidence as the '70s approached. For, in spite of tremendous advances, the system remained hopelessly antiquated for the task facing it. Physical expansion would necessitate dramatic increases in staff, while new display techniques, pioneered at Expo 67 in some cases, called out for changes in programming as well. As the numbers of professional staff increased there was a corresponding rise in the role of their professional organization. The Canadian Museums Association gradually emerged from its quiescence to become an effective lobbying instrument on behalf of the institutions that came into existence in record numbers in the ensuing decade. It joined a number of like-minded special interest organizations articulating the broader cultural community's perspective on government policies. As important as the professionalization of institutions was the emergence of a new and more vital cultural bureaucracy both at the federal and provincial levels. The centennial had required a massing of bureaucratic talent in Ottawa at a crucial time; the people involved were determined to keep the cultural ball rolling beyond 1967 and soon inaugurated a series of proposals to that effect.

Lodged within the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development since the early '50s, when it had been separated from the Geological Survey of Canada, the National Museum had been subject to a number of proposals for reform ever since the Massey/Levesque recommendations--including extensive plans for a

major new facility close to the centre of activities in downtown Ottawa as a centennial project, which were cancelled when the museum idea was scrapped for a centre for the performing arts (The National Arts Centre). It had to continue to make do with the by then hopelessly outdated Victoria Memorial Building.

Some important organizational changes had occurred in the previous decade as well, with the separation of the Human History Branch from the Natural History Branch. And there were some important accretions, like the Canadian War Museum and the National Aeronautical Collection, pointing toward a new Museum of Science and Technology. But the most critical step took place in 1964 with the transfer of the responsibility for the museum to the new office of Secretary of State, part of a move to concentrate cultural agencies under one umbrella ministry. With it came a series of policy reviews of museums in the country as well as the drafted but never implemented legislation designed to implement the Massey Commission's recommendations for a board of trustees and a stronger commitment to the programming of a history component to its operation.

These developments were finally rationalized in 1968 with passage of the National Museums Act, creating the National Museums Corporation, a crown corporation empowered to administer the affairs of four new institutions created out of the existing structure. The four new museums--Man, Natural Sciences, Science and Technology and Fine Arts (National Gallery)--were given separate status, but reported to a common board of trustees and a common secretariat, which would provide corporate functions of a variety of sorts, including budgetary control over each of the institutions. In addition, the secretariat assumed responsibility for implementing whatever programmes might emerge under the new policies. The corporation immediately became the most important player in the new museum world then emerging at the federal level. It would soon challenge museums across the country with a series of innovative policies.

Following a broad range of consultation, professionalism and programming was addressed specifically by the National Museums Policy of 1972. When Gerald Pelletier took over the Secretary of State portfolio from Judy Lamarsh in 1968, he found the system over-worked and under-staffed, its resources incapable of getting far beyond day-to-day requirements of keeping buildings open and maintained. He articulated the now famous democratization and decentralization policy, intended to set Canada's museum community in motion through programmes designed to deliver museum services to Canadians where they lived. To that end, a comparatively large injection of funds was made available to encourage a variety of activities.

The intent of the National Museums Policy was to increase public access to collections and break down the controlling element of existing museological practice. To achieve that it proposed core funding for democratization and decentralization activities in "associated" museums--mostly larger provincial and regional museums with the capacity to act as conduits for the "collections in motion" that were to be a central feature of the policy.[20] A close study of its dissemination activities remains to be done, but it is likely to reveal less encouragement for innovation in Canadian history programmes; art galleries profited most from this additional access to funds for touring exhibits, something they were already prepared to do under existing Canada Council programmes.[21] That was probably more a function of the uneven development of institutions than any inherent shortcoming of the policy. The programme also provided training and collections management support and, ultimately, conservation assistance to raise standards in institutions throughout the country. A national inventory of collections and an effective conservation policy were added to the policy as well. Though both proved incapable of achieving the national objectives set for them, they injected much needed funds into the curatorial areas of museums throughout the country. In addition, a number of Exhibition Centres were created and supported through their early years in communities with limited access to museums.

All this was embedded within a widely based policy stretching across a bundle of cultural institutions besides museums. More than anything else, it extended those patriotic centennial aspirations of 1967, now restructured to meet the objectives of the new cultural policy mandarins who determined to keep the flame of the celebration alive. When these cultural bureaucrats turned their attention to culture's role in resolving the basic issues facing the nation--that is, threats of breakdown of the fabric of Confederation, or implementation of policy objectives like enhanced multi-cultural activities--it was easy to find a place for museums alongside a number of other national institutions. It also extended the basic tenets of the Trudeau years ideal of "participatory democracy."[22]

For museums it was a heady time being close to the levers of political decision-making. Additional funds designed to fulfil politically arrived at policy objectives were eagerly added to an already burgeoning system, distorting existing structures while distracting institutions from their less politically engaged museological preoccupations. The Corporation insulated museums from the rawest sorts of patronage considerations so commonplace in other federal departments, but there were important political factors in decision-making nonetheless.

In the long run, the influence asserted over the bulk of new monies by provincially based museum establishments became most

important in determining activities. Through the "associate museum" network, which never really functioned as a network except to protect the vested interests of its members, and a consultative process that was as cumbersome as it was ineffective, provincial museums and art galleries became conduits for distribution of the new largesse from the federal treasury. In the post-centennial years, as previously, in spite of all the dramatic innovations by the Federal Government, the provinces remained the central players in most cultural fields, particularly museums. The tremendous capital expenditures during the celebratory phase of the centennial, continued to some extent through the politically controlled Special Programmes Cultural Initiatives, massively improved facilities available to the provinces.[23] In fact, the Victoria Memorial Museum, which continued to house the National Museum of Man and the National Museum of Natural Sciences, was unable to meet the environmental standards set by the new system and effectively barred from participation in many of the dissemination programmes of the new policy.[24]

Improved access to collections brought little innovation in the sorts of publics being served, except for steps like "Museumobiles" and the unity train, and various dissemination programmes directed toward school audiences, undertaken in concert with other federal agencies. While most were curatorial disasters of one sort or another, they at least addressed the ministerial mandate directly. Thousands of Canadians who never saw museums before in their lives were exposed to a sense of their national past. So, while there was growth and evolution, more money did not change many of the profession's pressing paradigms. Education and co-operative ventures among various institutions probably had their most dramatic impact on museum staff; as institutions across the country began communicating with each other regularly, if only when brought together for consultation by the requirements of new national policies. Most museums continued to define their audiences somewhat narrowly: that is, those who would take the trouble to visit museums.

Beneath that was a problem of defining the museum's role in the contemporary community--more particularly what role the new National Museum Corporation would have in the cultural politics of the nation. During the '70s and early '80s, the Corporation, through its national policies, adopted a somewhat missionary attitude verging on being prescriptive at times. Posing as the innovative and expansive force within the community, it was never easy for national policy makers to overcome the imperatives embedded within an inherently conservative system. This was an interesting by-product of expansion, combining as it did an educational function with a curatorial one. The basic philosophy underlying expanded activities was, and remains, that a dose of culture/heritage would prevent Philistinism, generally described as a failure to appreciate the finer things of life--comprised

primarily of the rich material past lodged in museum collections. Curators and museum educators constantly discuss their inability to penetrate into new sectors of the population; but in the end their objective remains to lure people into their museums. "If only people could understand the importance and centrality of material culture or art," they say, "they would show proper respect for their past and the future of museums would be brighter." As they take more and more of the public's dollars, curators are held accountable by politically centred bureaucrats, making programme funding dependent on conformity to politically arrived at objectives. This thinking runs counter to more traditional object- and institution-centred definitions of what is worth knowing about the past.

How can museums become relevant and yet maintain their integrity within the context? Scholarship seems to eschew relevance, arguing that it taints both objectivity and individual creativity. But the whole situation ignores what the public might be concerned with, assuming always that if only people could be properly educated to respond with enthusiasm, they would be enlightened. This identification of the proper subjects for museum programming lies at the heart of the issue. Curiously enough, the consequence of more political involvement in policy making and funding of museums has been less rather than more relevance. Fearful of treating subjects that might provoke the politically centred cultural bureaucrats that control funds, museums refrain from treating the controversial. As the broader realm of scholarship gropes toward a more social and usable past, museums have been forced to be less flexible in selecting themes for presentation.

As self-ordained keepers of the nation's collective memories--at least as expressed through material remains--curators have shown a commitment to proselytize, but little inclination to compromise traditional taxonomic preoccupations. This incapacity to listen to public concerns is a function of not reaching out to a new constituency. "Participatory democracy" is paid lip service, but there is no really relevant philosophy of action to allow for an interchange of views on programming with the participating public. Instead, museums become instruments for expanding bureaucracies, bent on pleasing political masters by increasing the visibility of funding throughout the system. Transfer of the Corporation from the Secretary of State to the Department of Communications in 1980 was accomplished when the cultural affairs branch of Secretary of State was brought under more direct control of a politically centred ministry. Within Secretary of State, museums had been centred in a cultural hierarchy that was expansive, their transfer to the Ministry of Communications, under the Deputy Ministership of Pierre Juneau, centred them within a cultural industries format that seemed to demand political results rather than encouraging innovation. In the process the National

Museums Corporation, created to insulate the Museums from the vagaries of direct ministerial control, increasingly became a vehicle for government policy and soon was subject to systematic attack as a inefficient and anomalous instrument.[25]

A major outgrowth of the 1972 policy seems to have been an industry devoted to analyzing it. Gerald Pelletier himself indicated at the time of its announcement that the policy was really a process rather than a fixed set of objectives and that it would have to be adjusted constantly. In terms of the associate museums the consultations were necessary on a continuing basis, for they were essential to the operation of the policy. But it was the evaluation of impact at every stage that politicized the process of government involvement. Politically responsive bureaucrats brought that; emergence of professional standards within the system extended the process. As museum services came to cost more, politicians and cultural mandarins came to question the effectiveness of the dollars spent on the system. It is a debate which stake-holders dominate; discussion is contained within the parameters of the structure they have created rather than extending beyond its constraints. The basic conclusion always falls down on the insufficiency of funding to fulfil all elements of the mandate. Always there is the cry that just a few dollars more could make the system work to the betterment of all Canadians. The issue, on the surface, is the extent to which politics circumscribes freedom to curate. Debate on the role and function of museums has been limited by these considerations.

A catalogue of the examinations of museum policy over the past decade would be quite extensive, culminating in the recent Withrow/Richard report recommending dismemberment of the NMC and absorption of its functions within Department of Communications. Dominant issues revolve round bureaucratic niceties, never addressing the question of a social role for museums. If museums are to have an impact on the way people think, they will have to come to grips with the peripheral place of their preoccupations in the community and a failure to identify significantly enough with their new constituency. While historical enquiry proceeds rapidly toward major redefinition of the nature of the past from a variety of perspectives, museums still address questions relevant to the scholarship of past generations. Perhaps it is a truism that museums, like textbooks are doomed to remain a generation behind active scholarship.

It is difficult at times to infuse traditional display techniques with relevant contemporary scholarship. But the problem is not so much with the scholarship as with the modalities of museums. So long as the "box of treasures" mentality prevails, there can be little hope of expanding the scope of activities beyond simply luring a few more visitors through the buildings. The linking of museum programming with "tourist destinations," with

its corresponding emphasis on spectacles, is a sign of the direction being taken. Content is watered down to a bare minimum as presentation overwhelms content. Instead of challenging the public with relevant content, museums will simply add on modern technological gimmicks--structuring everything to the requirement to hold visitors in town for that vital extra tourist day. Pleas for more money will be subject to compliance with a process that revolves round festivals rather than relevant social issues, which should comprise the core of programming. The often heard comment that natives of a community do not have to visit museums because they are for the "tourists" is too true and will only become more so.

If museums continue to assume their traditional role as mirrors into the past, they will have to remember that distortions reflected mirror the concerns of those who control it. Museum curators tend to reflect the present preoccupations of the community that spawned them. The current trend to bureaucratic and political control neutralizes most possibilities for social relevance. Requirements to meet dictates of whatever policy happens to be in place present a particularly invidious problem. Another is the tendency to decennialize our history; treating past events only on anniversaries of one form or another--as if the agenda for museums was being set by Coutts-Hallmark. If a subject is relevant it has a right to be espoused by museums whether or not it happens to be a hundred years old. It has obviously been a convenient hook for many institutions to pry funds from reluctant bureaucrats or from the political process, but is problematic when trying to reset agendas for a more socially relevant posture on the part of institution.

As the implications of social dislocations continue, museums are increasingly seen as safe havens from an unsatisfactory present. Their safe subject matter is in danger of becoming the new opiate of the masses--designed to entertain and embellish, but never to inform or question the present. Lost in the internal/external struggles of cultural bureaucrats will be any possibility of addressing the real concerns of the present and future nation.

It is commonplace to argue that Canadians have only a limited interest in their past. Such notions are patently false. Public history is dull only because the people who control access to it insist on treating material relevant to them and them alone, and insist on hamstringing institutions that should exist to assist people in their search for a usable past. When we compose a proper dialogue, free from the constraints of traditional museology or the political process, our museum scholars and the public will all be better informed. If on the other hand we continue to slight the public with history devoid of any relevance to present concerns,

Canadians may find it amusing but seldom informative, essentially irrelevant.

---

1. For a summary of curatorial attitudes in this regard, see National Museums of Canada, Towards a National Museum Policy for Canada (Draft working documents for discussion purposes, January 1989), representing the results of the various "Search Conferences" conducted during the summer of 1985.

2. H.H. Chartrand, An Economic Impact Assessment of the Canadian Fine Arts (Arts Research monograph presented at the Third International Conference on Cultural Economics and Planning, Akron, Ohio, 1984).

3. For a most interesting account of the relationship between these scientific ideas and the political realities of the day see Suzanne Zeller, Inventing Canada (Toronto, 1987).

4. For an account of the evolution of each of the provincial institutions as well as of the National Museum, see Archie Key, Beyond Four Walls: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums (Toronto, 1973); the Origins of the National Museum are treated in Loris S. Russell, The National Museum of Canada, 1910-1960 (Ottawa, 1961); while C.T. Currelly, I Brought the Ages Home (Toronto, 1956) offers some lore on the early days of the Royal Ontario Museum.

5. Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

6. Victoria Dickenson, "On the Arrangement of Museums, 1600-1919: An Investigation into the Ordering of Collections" Museum Assistance Program, Fellowship Program (Ottawa, 1984) 160-64.

7. See Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage, op.cit for an interesting account of the experience of these earliest collectors on the west coast.

8. Archie Key, op.cit.

9. C.J. Taylor, "National Historic Parks and Sites, 1880-1951: The Biography of A Federal Cultural Program" (Unpublished PhD thesis, Department of History, Carleton University, 1986).

10. H. Miers and S.F. Markham, A Directory of Museum and Art Galleries, Report of a Canadian Survey (New York, 1932); this was a study undertaken for the Carnegie Corporation that decried the lack of any sustained support for museums in

Canada and advocated a massive transfer of funds into the system. It was not acted upon in any way.

11. C.J. Taylor, op.cit.

12. For an over-view of the Commission's work see C. Bissell, The Massey Report and Canadian Culture (Ottawa, 1982). The Royal Commission's Report is published as Report of the Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences in Canada (Ottawa, 1951).

13. Vincent Massey, What's Past is Prologue (Toronto, 1963); and C. Bissell, The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office (Toronto, 1986) together offer a detailed assessment of Massey's contributions to Canadian culture.

14. B. Ostry, The Cultural Connection: An Essay on Culture and Government Policy in Canada (Toronto, 1978) sets a context for the impact of the French Canadian experience on the question of government role in cultural initiatives during the immediate post World War II years. A broader perspective on the early rising of the nationalist movement is provided in S. Mann-Trofimenkoff.

15. Hilda Neatby, So Little for the Mind (Toronto, 1953); summarizes her position on this question. A broader treatment of her philosophy on the question is found in H. Neatby, So Much To Do, So Little Time: The Writings of Hilda Neatby edited and annotated by M. Haydon, (Vancouver, 1983).

16. For a broad account of the post World War II community see I. Drummond, R. Bothwell and J. English, Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism (Toronto, 1981).

17. Gordon Sheppard, A Special Report on the Cultural Policy and Activities of the Government of Canada, v.1-4 (Ottawa, 1965). This remarkable document, commissioned by Maurice Lemontaigne in 1964, reviewed most aspects of cultural policy in the context of the Massey/Levesque recommendations and found the system hopelessly out-dated in most aspects. It called for a much more activist role for the federal government, presaging many of the developments that would occur following the centennial of Confederation in 1967.

18. Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters and Sciences in Canada: Report, Recommendations (Ottawa, 1952).

19. See Archie Key, op.cit.

20. National Museums of Canada, A National Museums Policy for the 80's (Ottawa, 1981). A preliminary statement of intent and

brief to the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, this document offers a brief summary of developments between 1968 and 1980.

21. The National Museums of Canada, Places of Discovery, 1972-1979: Highlights from the first five years of the National Museums Policy (Ottawa, 1977).

22. Three interesting approaches to the broad question of government and culture are Susan Crean, Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture (Don Mills, 1976); David Helwig, Love and Money: The Politics of Culture (Ottawa, 1980); and George Woodcock: Strange Bedfellows: The State and the Arts in Canada (Vancouver, 1985). None of the three pay particular attention to the position of museums in the Canadian situation, but all offer an analysis of the broad question of the role of government in the arts and all are polemical in one way or another.

23. An Overview of Cultural Initiatives Programmes, 1980-1985 (Ottawa: Department of Communications, 1985).

24. A National Museums Policy for the 80's (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1981).

25. Since the '80s and transfer to DOC the Corporation has been subject to a number of enquiries, started out with inclusion in the more massive Applebaum-Hebert Cultural Policy Review Committee, which reported in 1982. See Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (Ottawa, 1982) and its Summary of Briefs and Hearings (Ottawa, 1982), which pose a series of questions about integration of museum functions within a broader heritage strategy for the nation.

Section Two:

THE VISION

CROSSROADS OF CULTURE:
THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION

George F. MacDonald
Director, Canadian Museum of Civilization

In February of 1982 the Government of Canada announced that the Victoria Memorial and Lorne Buildings in Ottawa were environmentally inadequate to safeguard our national treasures and that new treasure houses would be constructed simultaneously. It was soon decided that they would be placed at either end of the Alexandra Bridge as a great ceremonial arch spanning the ravine boundary between Ontario and Quebec. The Gallery was to be on the Ottawa side at Nepean Point while the National Museum of Man was to be located at Parc Jacques Cartier in Hull. In fact, each new facility had numerous sites to choose from, but from my perspective the low ground with easy access to the river, and the ample acreage of the site (22 acres; 10 hectares) at Parc Laurier was the ideal solution. I was also delighted with the view of Parliament Hill from the site, which is exactly the one on the back of the Canadian dollar bill. (Once the dollar coin replaces the bill, we will have to anchor a giant effigy of a loon to maintain our claim.)

I was equally delighted when the Government of Canada appointed Douglas J. Cardinal as design architect for the project. Cardinal joined forces with Tetreault Parent & Languedoc of Montreal as construction partners. I had only seen photos of Cardinal's work at that time, but I was so struck with the organic forms of his architecture at Grande Prairie College and his stunning church at Red Deer, Alberta, that I asked that his name be put on the list of candidates. Dr. Jean Boggs, the first President of the Canadian Museum Construction Corporation, was similarly impressed when she saw Cardinal's work. After narrowing down a list of 85 of Canada's premier architects, neither of us was surprised when Cardinal was selected for the short list of competitors, nor for that matter with his final selection for the commission by Cabinet.

By December of 1983 the museum had developed, with Michael Lundholm, our corporation architectural advisor, a detailed programme in four huge volumes of the museum's requirements. Cardinal digested this impressive series of tomes and reduced our square metric concepts into an ebb and flow of liquid forms that seemed to us humble museum folk to have more to do with turbulence theory than they did with treasures boxes. I did think that the floor plans Cardinal produced at that time bore their closest relationship to the paintings of the Chippewayan artist Alex Janvier. I was not surprised later to come across an article that

the two had written jointly on their feelings about line and form. I was even more convinced when I saw a sketch floor plan Cardinal had filled in with coloured pencil tacked to the wall of his drafting room in Edmonton; the sketch bore striking parallels to Janvier's painting, or was it the other way around?

Just after Cardinal won the competition, I received a phone call from him that began with a torrent of ideas and associations resulting from conversations we had about the nature of our museum collections and what the museum hoped to represent to Canadians. I had commented that it sought to reflect the history of human beings in this vast country since the first people had entered it more than 15,000 years ago. Cardinal's concept was to capture this image in the building and landscaping, which would form a sculptural monument to the distinctive landscape that faced the first settlers who crossed from Asia into the New World as the glaciers began to melt away. He began with the image of the collection holding vaults as the bedrock of the Canadian Shield, which held our vast mineral wealth. Even these bedrock forms had been eroded and their angular forms smoothed by the glaciers that overrode them. Then the outwash streams had undercut them progressively as the glaciers melted away. This section of the building is predominantly faced with fossiliferous limestone that was itself overridden by glaciers in the region of Winnipeg.

The public wing of the building had roof vaults of copper that would eventually turn green to represent the eskers and drumlins of gravel and glacial till as the vegetation recolonized the land. Below them were the huge window structures of the Grand Hall whose glazing represented the remnants of the melting glaciers. The areas between these two contrasting structures were intended to represent the extensive plains over which mankind migrated millennia ago, threading their way between outwash streams and gravel ridges. At some points the meltwater flowed out from under the ice in torrents and at other places cascaded over waterfalls. All these features have been captured in the landscaping of the building. It will truly be a profound symbol of our nation at the dawn of human history. The building's contents, by contrast, are the achievements of those people over 15,000 years.

Many Canadians think our history began sometime after John Cabot or Jacques Cartier, or at most with the Vikings, but I can assure you that visitors to the new museum and its exhibits will be made aware of our history that is many times older than the pyramids. Next year we will begin a light and sound show, which will tell the story of the building with laser lights to show the mile-deep glaciers that once covered this region, as well as portraying rushing meltwater and driving snowstorms that have profoundly influenced our landscape.

In the fall and winter of 1983, construction preparations began on site and the enormous footprint of the building began to take shape. At first much of the work was below the level of Laurier Boulevard, which applies to more than half of the million gross square feet of floor space contained within the structure. Of that, less than half is usable for museum activities, as the rest is taken up in parking lots, mechanical and electrical rooms and corridors.

We are now exactly five years into construction. Soon the last elements of the roof over the entry pavilion and the theatre fly tower will be completed. The last of the stone cladding is being applied to the Laurier Street facade, and soon the windows of the Grand Hall and Lobby areas will be installed. It is clear at this point that we have a building quite unlike any other the world has seen. I would call this a "geoform" structure since its features are drawn directly from the landscape and the forces of nature that shaped it. It is also the most complex building the Government of Canada has ever built, from both the technical and aesthetic points of view. It employs many state-of-the-art technologies, from its origin in computer aided design to its computer controlled environmental and security systems. When finished it will surely be recognized as a world-class building and a high performance instrument. It is then my job as director to ensure that its unique features are duly recognized throughout Canada and abroad, and that it performs at the top of its capacity. In fact, I dream of the day in the very near future when we can bring the Lamborghini Club of Canada to our plaza to display their state-of-the-art automobiles against our state-of-the-art building. I might mention in passing that this is the first major building of the Federal Government to be completely serviced by fibre-optic cable and to be the first so-called "intelligent building" of a non-military nature in Canada.

But now let me tell you about what you will experience when you visit this new museum when it opens in July 1989 with its first permanent exhibitions! Before you actually enter the building, you will be welcomed into an enormous plaza, patterned to a large degree on the wonderful festive plaza in front of the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Like that museum, we will encourage and attract performers of all types to display their talents to the visitor. The entire plaza is laid out with sloped and terraced performance spaces where actors and musicians will involve the visitors even before they reach the front door. This plaza will also be an information centre where the visitor can get a preview, via video screens, of what the programmes of the day and week will be, as well as what other attractions the National Capital Area is offering. Lasers will trace graphic and textual images on the facades of the buildings that will further tell the visitor what programmes await them inside. The terraces and parapets of the building are also like a vertical series of stages where performers

can suddenly appear on one of multiple levels in a type of "parapet theatre."

The lower plaza is more intimate, but still sizeable. It can seat hundreds on the steps between the two plazas as well as in the cafeteria and restaurant terraces. Shielded from the street traffic noises, this plaza will be more appropriate to performances where dialogue and music are involved. The type of performance offered will run the gamut of Canada's historic and multicultural past, as well as offer glimpses of its future.

A third zone for outdoor public performance is the terraced bank of the river in front of the building, which will hold up to 5,000 people standing to watch the spectacular waterfront theatre we are planning under the name of "A Pageant of Canada." The concept was first conceived by Dr. Marius Barbeau, a pioneer of a wide spectrum of the arts who spent his entire career of over 50 years on museum projects that were often ahead of their time. His "Pageant of Canada" was performed at the Château Frontenac in Québec City in the late '20s and provided a broad panorama of Canadian history not unlike the one we plan at Parc Laurier. I had the pleasure of meeting Marius Barbeau when I first joined the museum staff, and I know he would have endorsed the direction in which our museum is now going.

Another mentor in this project is the great Canadian communication and media pioneer, Marshall McLuhan. In fact, the Department of Communications, which launched this museum project, sprang from McLuhan's fertile mind, and he has been duly recognized by it with the McLuhan Award, awarded internationally to outstanding contributors to communications. Our recent name change, from National Museum of Man to Canadian Museum of Civilization, is, in my view, another recognition of McLuhan's concept of a global village where all civilizations meet.

But first let me tell you about what we intend to say about Canada in the new museum. It is designed much like a sandwich, with the permanent exhibits on the first and third floors as the bread of the sandwich, and the middle, or entry floor from Boulevard Laurier, the filling between the slices. The centre floor will always be changing with special exhibits that provide variety and novelty to the sandwich. Special exhibits will focus to a large extent outside Canada, while the upper and lower floors will look in some detail at our regional expressions of Canadian culture. The first (or river level) floor will deal with the Native Peoples history, tribe by tribe, region by region, while the top floor will concentrate on the period of immigrant peoples--from the Norse, the first recorded boat people, to the Tamils, the boat people of today.

There is also a temporal sequence in the exhibit order. It begins with the furthest reaches of our prehistory on the lowest floor, which deals almost exclusively with Native Peoples, and covers the first fifteen millennia of history. Contact with more recent immigrants from other parts of the world is included, with their subsequent dramatic impacts on traditional Native cultures. Each regional presentation on the first floor is keyed to a giant map of Canada (50,000 square feet) to help the visitor understand where that region is located in reference to their mental map of the country. Each region will have a mix of three types of exhibitions, which vary to some degree depending on such factors as the richness of our collection from the area, current cultural developments there and so on. The first type of exhibition uses our nation-wide archaeological collection to sketch the outlines of environmental and cultural change and exchange that characterize the prehistory of each major cultural zone. The second core unit will feature our collection of classic ethnographic objects produced by the culture or cultures within that zone. For native peoples, our collections are rich in late 19th and early 20th century objects. We use the term "Golden Age" for this type of exhibit even though most of these cultures were already past their golden age of development by this time, and already suffering the devastating effects of epidemic diseases and cultural disorientation. The third element of the regional presentation of Native culture will deal with the current and future prospects for the survival of these ancient regional traditions that are in themselves the most valuable and unique heritage that Canada has produced to date in terms of its contributions to the heritage of mankind. I refer here to such examples as the truly remarkable adaptations of our Inuit people to extreme and shifting environments of the high arctic. Their cultures, from Siberia to Greenland, tell us much about our species' ability to survive and adapt to extreme environments.

Yet another example of world-class, home-grown culture is represented by the dramatic and graphic arts of the Native people on our west coast. A quick survey of the museums and art publications from around the world confirms Claude Lévi Strauss's declaration in Time magazine a few years ago that the arts of our west coast tribes rank with those of ancient Egypt and China as world class in their uniqueness and refinement. The Haida village of Ninstints on the Queen Charlotte Islands has recently been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO; Charles Edensaw, a master Haida carver, is one of the few Canadian artists who has been recognized by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada as a National Historic figure for his artistic achievements in traditional Haida style. I would even suggest that Bill Reid, a direct descendant of Charles Edensaw, is our best candidate for the honour of a Living National Treasure for Canada. We are fortunate to have two of Reid's major works, his 40-foot high "Master of the Waves" killer whale sculpture, and his 28-foot "Mythic Messengers" bronze casting, that will provide focal points

at the river entrance to the Grand Hall and outside of the building respectively.

Our collection of monumental sculptures from the Golden Age of west coast Indian art is unquestionably the best in the world. It will form the backdrop to the Grand Hall exhibit on the first floor. Here, an entire village of totem poles and plank houses will provide the context for interpreting west coast Native culture, as well as for the state banquet and public potlatches. Such feasts will be held with some frequency in the Grand Hall, which will be, as its name implies, the most impressive space to be found anywhere in Canada. Cardinal has enhanced the impressive dimension of this span, the size of a football field, even more by shaping it like a boat, so that the far ends disappear into infinity. There is a clear view of nearly 500 feet from the founders pavilion, over the plaza entrance, to the river entrance, with a clear ceiling height of over 50 feet most of the way.

This majestic panorama follows a symbolic axis as well as a line of sight that leads through the centre of the Grand Hall, through the six-storey bay window at the river entrance, across the Ottawa River, to the centre of Parliament and the Peace Tower. It is mostly an interior sight-line, but matched only by the outdoor, boulevard sight lines of Paris, Versailles and Washington. I suspect that the impact of aligning a diorama of the monumental sculpture of our west coast Native Peoples along this symbolic axis will bring home, to all Canadians who experience it, a sudden re-evaluation of the contribution of our Native Peoples not only to the heritage of our country but to that of all mankind. This enhanced evaluation will, I predict, be analogous to that provided by the marvelous Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City to the pre-Columbian art of Central America, or to what the Rockefeller wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York did for so called "primitive art" of the fourth world.

What I am saying here, of course, is that museums are highly charged, symbolic space-time capsules in which our value hierarchies are made manifest. Architects and artists dealing with symbolic spaces since the Lascaux caves or Stonehenge have known that all space is hierarchical and symbolically charged. This is particularly true of ritual space, which traditionally and cross-culturally works on axial alignments. It is especially potent where secondary axes cross the primary one. Ritual space, from the Dragon Lines of ancient Chinese geomancy, to the desert tracks of ancient America, the Lay lines, megalithic alignments and cathedrals of Europe, follow this rule. We have applied this axial rule to the new museum, which will result, I believe, in the creation of a number of very special alignments focusing on our building and its relationship to Parliament as the centre of Canada's political universe.

A corollary of the central axis concept in architecture (which deals primarily with interior space), is the concept of matching alignments in exterior space. Often, the central exterior axis crosses the interior axis, as with many cathedrals, where the major boulevard crosses the axis of the nave. Or it can parallel the axis of the building. Our major exterior axis parallels that of the Grand Hall and aligns the centre of our plaza with the Peace Tower. I expect that 100 million photographs will be taken on this axis by visitors before we celebrate the first centennial of the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC).

Crossing both of these parallel (interior and exterior) axes to Parliament is that of the ceremonial ring that will be known as Peace Boulevard (according to the latest word from the National Capital Commission). The intersection of our exterior axis and this ceremonial ring provides a compass point that defines our entry plaza.

Partly because Cardinal has used two parallel straight-line and one circular axis to align our building, and partly because of his architectural style based on concepts of circular ritual space, this building is completely unlike traditional western architecture in which buildings are aligned in rectangular grids determined by straight-line axes. Hence, Cardinal's building does not have a preferred point of view, but many points of view determined by tangents on arcs of circles. The result is a building that will be the answer to a photographer's prayer. One alignment after another reveals itself as the visitor moves around and through the building. Each one is a monumental declaration of space-time hierarchies worthy of photo-capture and recording by pilgrims to our national shrine.

Spatial hierarchies also work in the vertical dimension. It is easy to see from the exterior of the building that Cardinal's vertical axes are also not straight lines, which I consider fortunate since straight-line superposition suggests concepts of superiority and dominance in western architecture. "Head office" is always on the top floor of a building in our society. The floors of Cardinal's building rarely have the same footprint as the one below, and often the upper floors overhang or recede from them. The effect of this is to break the time-hierarchy associations of most buildings where "what's on top is best." This is a critical consideration in a multicultural museum such as our own, since it suggests that the culture expression that dominates the top floor is the "highest" and therefore "best" produced by the nation.

In the past, the message has been read by the visitor that the culture of our two official language groups are at the top, our Native peoples are at the bottom, and other language and culture groups are somewhere in between. While the floors of Cardinal's building on the public side (block C) represent temporal

hierarchies (most recent at the top) they do not invite straight-line or direct comparisons of cultural values. For this reason we decided to integrate both Native People and other ethnic immigrant groups into the top-floor recent history exhibits. I have believed from the outset that people from every ethnic group in this country should be able to find themselves in our exhibits. Even more to the point, they should be able to find themselves on the top floor along with the major issues that are important to them as Canadians, but also as people with roots that go back beyond Confederation. Canada is not, and never has been, a melting pot of culture. It is rather a crossroads, where valid cultural forms can be exchanged and built upon. Crossroads are important both as marketplace and as ritual centre: the first primarily addresses our communication needs with our fellow man; the second one addresses communication needs with our gods and our ancestors.

Cardinal's building is at the same time both global village and universal church. It celebrates the cultural achievements of mankind from the ice age shaman who painted Lascaux to the space age wizards who plot spiritual pathways in fibre-optic cables.

To summarize, the first and third floors are devoted to Canada's prehistory and history respectively, while the middle floor at the main entry level will feature changing exhibitions from all over the world as well as contemporary Canadian traditional arts and crafts. Special exhibit areas have been created for fine crafts, for regional and folk art forms and for contemporary Indian and Inuit art. Other exhibit areas deal with changing shows on ethnic groups in Canada and in their homelands. For example, the first exhibit in 1989 will focus on the Chinese in Canada, to be followed by the Ukrainians in Canada and so on.

Another special space on this floor will deal with music and dance from across Canada and relate the musical instrument and costumes in our extensive reserve collections to the living traditions found throughout the country. Artists and performers will be brought to the capital regularly to perform in this area as well as in the theatre-auditorium nearby on the same floor.

Thirteen thousand square feet on the entry level (second floor) will be devoted to travelling exhibitions from across the country and from abroad. Some of these will be so called "Blockbuster Exhibitions" that are part of major co-productions between various major museums of the world. Through this facility we will be able to bring many of the major historical treasures of the world to audiences in the capital, and thereby fulfil that part of our mandate that relates to the civilization of all humanity. The time is past when we could build world-class collections of our own from abroad, but there is no reason why we cannot borrow the best the world has to offer for the new facility at Parc Laurier.

It is a state-of-the-art facility in terms of security and environmental control systems.

Several other features of the entry level of the building are worthy of attention. The first area, with its own separate entrance off the lobby, is the Children's Museum. There are now over 100 such museums in the United States, although the number in Canada is very small. This will be the first national Children's Museum in Canada as well as the largest facility of its kind in the country. Its existence is predicated on the concept that children are most susceptible to sensory learning that extends well beyond the traditional analytical learning practised by most museums. Traditionally, artifacts are to be seen and studied but never touched (or tasted or smelled!).

The Children's Museum must be more than a classroom, however. It must be a place where children's natural abilities to learn rapidly from their environments is not inhibited by the rigid routines of formal learning systems that deny individuality, active participation and natural curiosity and that allow fear of group rejection or sanctions. It is in the Children's Museum where the central mission of the CMC, which is to contribute substantially to intercultural understanding, can have its most profound effect. In addition to a wide variety of special changing exhibits and activities, I think the Children's Museum should devote a major gallery space to a "Looking Glass World" where children can enter into the lifestyles and behavioural roles of cultures very different from their own in both time and space. Children witness abysmal poverty, starvation, race riots and warfare daily in their family living rooms, but how can their young, inexperienced minds make any meaning of these events? In a recent survey, the Children's Museum in Boston found that two-thirds of the children thought they would be caught up in some form of human disaster they were so used to witnessing on television and die before they reached adulthood. The Boston Children's Museum is now planning a special exhibit for children to prepare them for a bloodbath in South Africa. Other Children's Museums are also trying to use their facilities to promote better understanding between peoples of the world and are negotiating the exchange of personnel with Soviet and Chinese children's palaces in order to open this doorway between peoples that adults and generals fear to tread. We are planning a joint exhibition with the Indianapolis Children's Museum entitled "Kids Connect," which addresses itself to the ability of children to quickly accept differences before traditional mind sets freeze over.

At the same time, the Children's Museum should not be deadly serious, and it will not be. Part of the Children's Museum is an outdoor park of several acres, which will be a safe but joyous environment for kids. It is hoped that the central feature will

be a carousel as a cross-generational icon uniting children, parents and grandparents in the thrill and nostalgia of the carousel that has been part of Old World cultures for many centuries. We hope to obtain the carousel from Roseneath, Ontario, built in 1912.

The children's park will also feature water themes that show the importance of water routes to this country from the time of the voyagers. We are seeking private patrons and sponsors to add some of these special features to the Children's Museum.

Another feature of the Children's Museum will be the creation of sensory environments that stimulate mental development. Psychologists found decades ago that adding visual and tactile stimuli to babies' cribs aided their mental development, so now psychologists have postulated whole environments where babies can benefit from well-orchestrated multimedia environments. It has been suggested by some of our specialist advisors that stimulating environments can be provided for pre-natal infants. Imagine visiting a museum before you are even born!

Another very special feature of the entry level lobby is the world's most sophisticated movie theatre. The recently developed super format films are often 10 times larger than regular movies (both the film and the screens). The IMAX screen is five stories high, while a projection dome over your head serves as the Omnimax screen. This is all Canadian technology, spawned from our successes at the National Film Board of Canada in experimental film, and at Expos '67 and '86. Our abysmal failure to capture world attention in the traditional 35 millimetre film format has now been leapfrogged by our breakthrough with a new level of film technology that has the characteristics in which we Canadians excel, that is, technology that is both visionary and reliable at one and the same time.

The central approach of the CMC is to dissolve the frame that separates the visitor from the cultural experience, whether that experience is conveyed by artifacts, by film or video or by live theatre or performance. The well-proved direction that all museums and cultural institutions in general now seek is the direct confrontation, the interactive experience.

Omni-IMAX film is one such approach we will use, for as the IMAX Corporation says, "It is like being there." New productions in this film format that we hope to co-produce include a special production for the 50th anniversary of the National Film Board. Called <u>The Tiger Emperor,</u> this film examines the accomplishments of the first emperor to unite China; he built the Great Wall and commissioned an army of 8,000 terra cotta warriors for his tomb.

Removing the frame between the object or experience and the viewer has led us down a most interesting path. In exhibits we have chosen to construct well-researched dioramas that engulf the visitor; these replace traditional showcases that distance the viewer from the object. Greater interaction will be achieved by introducing the live human agent of culture--whether the scholarly researcher, the tribal elder, the storyteller or the trickster/performer.

This direction of our programming is perhaps best represented in the design for our theatre, which we call "The World Window Theatre." It has a reasonable but modest capacity for an audience of 550 people and facilities for a level of theatre well below that of the National Arts Centre, but well suited to the traditional type of performance we plan to develop.

Beyond this, it is a theatre for which the stage is 25,000 miles across. It is the first theatre in history that can provide permanent facilities for performers a world apart to link their performance through the marvels of satellite video. The current development of high definition video projector and high definition television satellite broadcast allows interactive global theatre for the first time in human history. I envisage programmes in which movie dancers on our stage dance with partners in the British Isles, or when Inuit in Siberia do drum dances with colleagues in Labrador settlements, or when New Year lion dancers on our stage dance with partners in Hong Kong or Shanghai, or where circle dancers in Jerusalem are completed by dancers on stage in Hull, or where Ukrainian dancers from Edmonton perform with those from Kiev as well as with those on our stage. This would truly be the global village McLuhan dreamed of. Other electronic shaman could dance a global peace dance in front of their warrior siblings.

Join us July 1, 1989, at the global village marketplace for our first launch into the cultural cosmos--the big step for mankind.

BRINGING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO CANADIANS THROUGH A LIVING PLACE: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

J. Wm McGowan
Director, National Museum of Science and Technology

Before I discuss what the National Museum of Science and Technology is today and what it must become tomorrow, think about Canada at this moment in time--where we as a nation have come from and the potential of this country in the future. In Canada today there is nearly 9 per cent unemployment--16 per cent among our young and 25 per cent in some parts of our country. Our economy is clearly far from what we would like it to be. The value of our dollar lurks at 75 per cent that of the United States dollar, which is rapidly tumbling in value on the world market. The stock market crash of '29 is being rerun, at least in part.

As the Science Council of Canada has repeatedly pointed out, foreign ownership today--mostly American--prevails in nearly 50 per cent of our manufacturing sector and rises to 75 per cent in the higher value-added part of the manufacturing sector, largely our knowledge-based industries. What the government's "free trade" policy will do for us is still being debated.

We have become a relatively rich nation--our standard of living is roughly comparable to the Americans--largely because we have depended upon our natural resources. We have been willing to sell our resources at a profit so that we could buy back finished products. But this situation cannot continue: first, there is now less need for our resources abroad--we extract more product from less raw material; second, many of our once sought-after materials such as copper, aluminium, iron, nickel and asbestos are being replaced by glass fibres, plastics, compound materials, ceramics and special cryogenic insulants; third, other countries--many Third World countries--are supplying resources at a lower price than we can and are developing trained scientists and technologists as effectively, and sometimes even more effectively, as we are, thus further eroding our potential lead in our resource-based and non-resource-based industries.

For us to continue to compete in these traditional areas, we must effectively use research as the base for the development and deployment of technology at a level unknown in Canada in the past. In many instances, the use of artificial intelligence-based machines and robots of all kinds will replace the usual large labour force. Are we prepared emotionally in Canada for this change?

Finally, our dependence on the United States as our economic partner ever increases. How can we therefore identify for Canadians--particularly our young--an exciting future which will keep them home and gainfully employed in exciting jobs? Our future depends so critically upon them.

Take heart--accompanying the ever-present down side, there are good things happening. Government and industry are now beginning to realize that the education of our young and, for that matter, all Canadians in areas related to technology and the supporting sciences is absolutely imperative. Furthermore, government now insists that this matter be raised to the highest level of priority within the Cabinet.

As an indicator of this recognition, the Prime Minister has established the National Advisory Board of Science and Technology (NABST), which he himself chairs. Also, he has given highest priority to provincial and federal activity related to the public awareness of science and technology; the Ministry of State for Science and Technology (MOSST), reporting through the new Department of Industry, Science and Technology (DIST), has packaged an extensive federal public relations programme focusing on science and technology under the glitzy title of Innovaction--Innovation and Action. For the first time I can remember, there is now a thirst among Canadians for information about forgotten Canadian heroes and Canadian accomplishments in research, science and technology.

Over the last year, the number of clippings in our papers, relevant stamp dedications by Canada Post, radio and television reports and documentaries dealing with the Canadian aspects of science and technology have markedly increased. There are exceptions to all this movement, of course. Maclean's, for example, reflecting much of what has led Canada to take a back seat in technology, still fails to recognize that science and technology are at all relevant to Canada's development.

We all agree that our future depends upon our ability to build a strong economy that inspires confidence. For our future to be a good one, Canadians must, first of all, feel confident that they can compete on the international level. There is plenty of evidence of this but, unfortunately, little of it has, in the past, been shared by Canadians. Furthermore, Canadians must now be willing to move out of the labour-intensive sectors, develop many new industries that depend upon knowledge, advanced research and innovation, and move comfortably into the service sectors, much of which will be associated with serving tourists from Canada, the United States and the world.

What does all this have to do with museums, particularly the National Museum of Science and Technology? When Minister Flora

MacDonald addressed us in her opening remarks at the beginning of this series "Towards the 21st Century," she spoke of "a new sense of national leadership growing among the four flagship museums." This sense of leadership is very real for us: we see ourselves as teachers, as leaders in the public awareness of science and technology in Canada. We at NMST are not willing to have our museum simply as a showcase for our past, important though this may be, but as a centre equally dedicated to demonstrating, in an exciting hands-on way, today's technologies and the sciences that led and are leading to their development, and a peek at what is coming tomorrow.

With the help of many departments of government--federal, provincial and local--industries and educational institutions, we plan to be an effective force in the development of Canada and the reinforcement of Canadian pride in our accomplishments and certainty about our future. On these matters we plan--at least for the moment, to be very chauvinistic.

No other institution has taken the lead in telling the Canadians the story of how science and technology are a rich part of their culture. Therefore, if we are to fulfil what we see as our mandate, we must accept the role as an educational institution that collects significant artifacts and archival material, preserves them and studies these things so we can best tell Canada's story to the world. We plan to complement and even extend government's commitment to the public awareness of science and technology without jeopardizing our position as an arm's-length cultural institution.

We recognize that the principal tool for developing an enlightened future citizenry must be our primary and secondary schools, our technical colleges and our universities; still, we believe that the National Museum of Science and Technology--the only one we are likely to have in Canada--has to be the leader among a community of science-related museums and science centres, which can play a very special role in reaching young and old alike.

What I have reviewed is what is needed and what we see as the future role for the National Museum of Science and Technology. Now look with me at what we have on hand today to develop our very special institution.

NMST is the newest of the four national museums. It was formed 20 years ago this month, as a 100th birthday gift to the nation; at the same time, the province of Ontario formed its science exhibition centre--the Ontario Science Centre--one of the world's best centres, which though it had a very limited provincial mandate to popularize science, has an extravagant plant and nearly four times the resources of the National Museum of Science and Technology.

The National Museum of Science and Technology was born in a bun factory, a Morrison-Lamothe bakery warehouse in the southeast corner of Ottawa, in a sense fashioned from the rib of man, the Museum of Man, now the Museum of Civilization. Many of its collections have come from the National Museum of Civilization, while others, like much of the locomotive collection, has come from the Library Collection, London, Ontario. Still other collections, such as our most precious collection in aviation, has come from the fusion of three major aviation collections, and others, largely unshown, have come from places like Ontario Hydro.

From its inception, NMST focused upon technology and its supporting physical sciences and engineering, though because of our responsibility to tell of the technologies used in forestry, agriculture and, in time, fisheries, and their impact on Canadians, it has also included in its exhibitry biology, bio-engineering and biotechnology.

The museum has brought together world-recognized collections in agriculture, aviation, other modes of transportation like automobiles and bicycles, communications and printing technology, and excellent though flawed collections in many other areas, such as railroads, industrial technology, photography, computing and energy including mining. These collections are unfortunately dated, but are complemented by superb collections of photographs and archival material. These things are the jewels in the crown of our museum.

From its inception, NMST has been a living place, a museum designed to entertain and stir people's imagination with regard to Science and Technology, using many of the techniques we associate with very popular science demonstration centres such as the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto, Science North in Sudbury and the Exploratorium in San Francisco. The founding curators of NMST had the imagination to realize that technologies can best be shown and related to the needs of people if they are displayed in a living setting. As a consequence, NMST has been and will always be a living museum. The Aviation Museum, for example, is housed in three soon-to-be-demolished World War II hangers at Rockcliffe Airport with access to a seaport on the Ottawa River. The Agriculture Display Centre is at the Experimental Farm of Agriculture Canada, while the rail exhibit is enhanced by the now famous steam train to Wakefield, which will run on a regular basis next year from Hull to Wakefield.

The concept of an exciting technology park has been brought together on the 10 or so hectares in front of the present museum building, demonstrating many examples of technology. If all goes well, the park will continue to grow. We have plans--preliminary though they may be--to develop a second steam train ride though

the park, linking the museum with the many food services which have grown up along the street and on the other side of the park. Furthermore, the museum as a living, working, hands-on place brings to the public such things as egg hatcheries, which the children adore, and growth chambers as part of our agriculture technology. The link between the living and the machine will always be stressed at NMST.

Though these marks of our museum remain today and will be expanded tomorrow, NMST has broadened its focus to include an extensive research and publication programme. Our first book, Mind, Heart, and Vision: Professional Engineering in Canada 1887 to 1987, was recently launched. It is the result of extensive research by our new Director of Research, Dr. Norman Ball, and his associates. If first sales are any indication, it will be a bestseller. Canadians today are thirsty for information on their technological past and future.

NMST recently hosted the 5th Conference of the Canadian Science and Technology Historical Association. By doing so, NMST was attempting to become a significant leader in research into the history of science and technology. This conference gave us an opportunity to show off not only our first book but our new research programmes in aviation, communications and space, and medicine and other things. It is significant that the Medical Research Council (MRC) is now sponsoring one post-doctoral fellowship on the history of medicine, and the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) another one on other aspects of science and technology. These are all firsts we are very proud of.

Hosting the conference also gave us an opportunity to discuss with our research colleagues our embryonic plan to form a unique Institute of the History of Science and Technology in Canada. It would involve the universities of Carleton and Ottawa and the Public Archives and, if all goes well, it would link Ottawa institutions with many others across Canada. Our collections, our superb conservation team, our now growing historical and social impact research teams--all are being prepared for our future role as a major teaching and research institution dedicated to changing the attitude of the nation with regard to science and technology.

Our first priority is to develop one of the three or four greatest aviation museums. Phase I, which will open on 17 June 1988, has been completed. In it, we will be able to protect our world-class collection, though not show it as we should or discuss the impact aviation has had upon the development of this nation. Certainly, Canada's leadership in aviation and aviation electronics has made it possible for us to reach and communicate with all parts of our vast nation and to develop many related industrial areas where we have become world leaders. The site for the new Aviation

Museum is spectacular. It is on the south bank of the Ottawa River--just downstream from the Parliament Buildings and the new site for the bulk of NMST in the future.

We are now giving priority to telling about the development of communications in Canada and about the space science and technology which support it. As Flora MacDonald pointed out in her opening comments for this series, "the vastness of the country"--and I might add its harshness--"and our small scattered population have forced us to do extensive research on a continuously changing upper atmosphere we used to reflect radio signals from and to develop unique space technologies to make uninterrupted radio, television and telephone communications possible throughout all of Canada."

Just a few weeks ago, NMST, with the Ministry of State for Science and Technology, opened an exhibit honouring 25 years of Canada in space and the people, Canadian heroes, like Dr. John Chapman, the undisputed father of Canada's space programme, and others who have made the Canadian space story a success. The exhibit will remain at 1867 St. Laurent Boulevard--the old bun factory as we lovingly refer to it--but we hope in the summer before beginning a tour of Canada. The exhibit explains how extensive fundamental research in Canada related to the upper atmosphere led to the successful launch of the Alouette I Research Satellite, 29 September 1962, at Vandenberg Air Base in California. No other research satellite has been so successful, remaining operative for 10 years before it was shut off from the ground. No satellite has produced more internationally significant scientific papers.

With the launching of Alouette I, Canada became the third country in space with its own satellite. Since then, Canada, with its American partner NASA, has launched many research satellites, and through the action, Telesat Canada has managed the world's first geostationary (fixed) commercial telecommunications and broadcast satellite. In 1976, the Hermes satellite was launched, permitting Canada to play a leading role in the development of telecommunications, tele-medicine and tele-education in remote parts of our country. For this achievement, the Department of Communications--through Minister MacDonald--with NASA has recently received an Emmy Award, which is now on display at NMST as part of the "25 years of Canada in Space" exhibit.

Every Canadian knows of Canada's leading role in the development of space robotics through Canadarm and the commitment of Canadians to space through the trip of Marc Garneau in 1984. But with all this, only few Canadians know of our magnificent accomplishments. The same is unfortunately true abroad--museums I have visited in Russia, England, France, Japan and the United

States have also completely ignored them--"Only in Canada, you say!"

Technology and the supporting sciences and the direction of research change a wee bit daily. For example, it has taken over 150 years for humankind to develop photography as a tool in the laboratory and as a toy at home. But something new and exciting is happening today, the invention and use of holography. Recently, NMST opened the most ambitious holographic exhibit ever presented, which points to the future of holography in information gathering and as a powerful information display technique. The future of holography as a special tool for research is enormous. Although Canada's involvement in this exciting area in the past has been small, we feel that through the exhibit the future of holography in Canada is secured. You may remember how at Expo 86 artist Michael Snow showed off this new tool as an art form. Soon NMST will open an equally exciting display on room temperature super-conductivity, which, like holography, will demonstrate the potential importance of this new technical development in the daily lives of tomorrow's Canadians.

Exhibits like "25 Years of Canada in Space," a 6,000-square-foot exhibit built in conjunction with the Minister of State for Science and Technology, as well as exhibits on holography and super-conductivity, are expected to tour Canada. Within a few years, we hope to have completed a 30,000-square-foot exhibit on Canada in Space, which we hope can be located in the West for at least three or four years before returning home as part of a new Communications and Space Exhibit Centre planned for the islands in the downtown of the National Capital Region.

The third exhibit now showing at the museum, entitled "It all began with Saunders," has been supported to a large extent by Agriculture Canada and the Western Wheat Pools. This exhibit, which eventually we hope will travel, describes the early days of biotechnology in Canada and the beginnings of basic research related to the development of winter wheat here.

It is significant that preliminary discussions have been undertaken with the Department of External Affairs to see that these and other exhibits related to the development of technology and the use of science in Canada are available for touring abroad. In addition to an extensive outreach exhibit programme, special attention has been given to the development of audio-visual and television material which describe the different aspects of science and technology in Canada. Shortly, a special will be presented through TV Ontario which focuses on the accomplishments of Professor John Polanyi, a Canadian and this year's Nobel Prize winner in chemistry. It is interesting that this production became a reality through the co-operation of many of John Polanyi's friends, who gathered at a special dinner for him last spring

sponsored by the Prime Minister. Each person who attended the dinner contributed 40 dollars to the development of the television special.

A number of science-related plays have been produced through the National Museum of Science and Technology. The one that has received the largest circulation is entitled "All I Get is Static." It tells the story of Reginald Aubrey Fessenden, a forgotten Canadian, the father of radio. It appeared for six weeks at Expo 86 before it made a national tour. We are delighted that Canada Post only recently recognized this great man with a stamp in his honour.

Other audio-visuals, television productions, books, travelling exhibits, plays, our artist-in-residence programmes supported by Canada Council, several publications and a very successful "Invent an Alien" programme, the winners of which went to Space Camp in Alabama last spring, are all part of the programme of the new National Museum of Science and Technology to reach all Canadians in all parts of Canada.

Besides all of this, there are two major programmes that are now part of our dream for the Museum. In the first instance, we are trying to move an extensive part of the Museum collection--really part of the Museum itself--out of Ottawa. For example, we have already made preliminary arrangements for the bulk of our rail collection to be combined with that of the National Rail Museum in Montreal. If all goes well, it will be relocated in a new site in the Vieux Port of Montreal. From this combined collection, we hope to develop two unique displays, one in Ottawa at a new Transportation Exhibition Centre and the other in Montreal. It is our intention to work closely with colleagues in the Canadian Railway Historical Society to develop for Canada one of the finest railway museums in the world. It is planned that NMST staff be directly involved in the programme.

Similar outreach plans are in an embryo stage for Toronto, Moncton, St. John's and Vancouver, where the "golf ball" of Expo 86 is to become a unique new science centre, Science World. It is our intention that perhaps one staff member be located at each of these sites, not only to be in charge of our artifacts and special exhibits there, but to organize the rotation of exhibits across the country.

The second major plan is to develop a new home for NMST. If we are to continue to maintain a viable museum with an extensive outreach programme, it is important that, in time, the National Museum of Science and Technology develops its home near the Parliament Buildings, thus complementing the new National Gallery, the Museum of Civilization and the planned Museum of Contemporary Photography.

As part of our plan--really our dream now shared by many--it is also our intention to work not only with the federal Department of Communications--our Department, the Department committed to coordinating Canadian cultural agencies--but with many other departments of federal, provincial and local governments, with industries and with the schools and universities to accomplish this. It is our intention, following from an extensive study carried out jointly between ourselves and the National Capital Commission (NCC), to develop most of the National Museum of Science and Technology along the western border of what NCC calls the National Capital Core West, in refurbished, historically significant industrial buildings. These reach from the Connors Building and the old pumping station in the northwest corner of Brewery Creek in Hull down through the Devil's Hole area now containing many significant industrial heritage buildings owned by E.B. Eddy and Hydro Quebec, the Chaudiere Falls area and Chaudiere and Victoria Islands with their many historically noteworthy industrial buildings.

The intent would be to develop the Museum as part of an Industrial Heritage Park. This concept was brought forward recently for public consideration by NCC and received the overwhelming support of the citizens of the National Capital Region. Somewhat similar projects have already been very successful in Lowell, Massachusetts, and at Iron Bridge in western England.

It is our plan eventually to develop a series of exhibition centres throughout the Industrial Heritage Park. The focus in the first instance will be on communications and space, on transportation, industry including the forest-based industries, energy including mining, man's environment and basic science through a unique science centre. We plan to have this network of exhibit centres integrated into the fabric of the old industrial heart of Ottawa where there are still active power plants and paper mills, as well as non-functioning carbide mills, log slides, pumping stations and water turbines, many of which are more than 100 years old. All of this is located only a few hundred metres from the Parliament Buildings, the new National Gallery, the Museum of Civilization and the Rideau Canal and a few kilometres along waterways from our already developed living centres at Rockcliffe Airport and Agriculture Canada's Experimental Farm. What an exciting opportunity for all Canadians.

The idea of developing a very special institution that focuses on the public awareness of science and technology in Canada is imperative for the future of our country. Having the NMST home eventually located as a key part of the world's most significant Industrial Heritage Park and immediately next door to our Parliament Buildings will do much to meet this end. However, for

the moment and for some years to come, home base will remain at 1867 St. Laurent. It is here that we are planning and experimenting for our future. Please plan to spend some time with us as we invent many new things.

A FUTURE IN THE PAST: THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

Gyde V. Shepherd
Assistant Director, Public Programmes
National Gallery of Canada

Norman Bethune wrote to the painter Marion Scott from Madrid, 5 May 1937:

> The function of the artist is to disturb. His duty is to arouse the sleeper, to shake the complacent pillars of the world. He reminds the world of its dark ancestry, shows the world its present, and points the way to its new birth. He is at once the product and the preceptor of his time. After his passage we are troubled and made unsure of our too-easily accepted realities. He makes uneasy the static, the set and the still. In a world terrified of change, he preaches revolution--the principle of life. He is an agitator, a disturber of the peace--quick, impatient, positive, restless and disquieting. He is the creative spirit of life working in the soul of men.[1]

Almost exactly 108 years separates the founding of the National Gallery of Canada and the Royal Canadian Academy from the opening of Moshe Safdie's new National Gallery. It is a walk of only four city blocks from the still existing Clarendon Building at the corner of George and Sussex in Ottawa to the new Gallery at the corner of Sussex and St. Patrick, adjacent to Nepean Point, in magnificent counterpoint to the Houses of Parliament and the Notre Dame Basilica. Jean Sutherland Boggs has written: "It would take the talents of a Horatio Alger to capture the particular poignancy and nobility of the survival of the National Gallery of Canada while chronicling its undeniably heroic achievements."[2] As 17th Plaunt lecturer at Carleton University in 1977, Jean Boggs brilliantly traced the highlights of this history, already portrayed in her excellent account of the National Gallery published by Oxford University Press in 1971.

The raison d'être of the National Gallery of Canada lies in the artists and their works--held in trust--which, in Etienne Gilson's words, "add to the beauty of the world."[3] These never change in themselves, in their wonderful and disturbing originality, although our setting and our understanding of them does. In his Voices of Silence, André Malraux writes:

> Each of the masterpieces is a purification of the world, but their common message is that of their existence, and

> the victory of each individual artist over his servitude, spreading like ripples on the sea of time, implements art's eternal victory over the human situation.[4]

The first exhibition of the Canadian Academy (later Royal Canadian Academy) of Arts opened 6 March 1880 at the Clarendon Hotel in Ottawa, in the presence of Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald and his wife. Presiding was John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, Marquis of Lorne, Governor General of Canada and husband of Princess Louise, a painter and daughter of Queen Victoria.

A splendidly romantic vision of the Canadian landscape by the Academy's first President, Lucius O'Brien's Sunrise on the Saguenay entered the collections in 1880 as a qualification of membership in the Academy, whose purposes were the formation of a national collection and the foundation of a national gallery "at the seat of government." It would also be an objective of the Academy to hold exhibitions in the principal cities of the Dominion, sowing the seed, at least in intention, of the Gallery's national programme. This programme began in 1914 and assumed special importance when the gallery was forced to vacate the Victoria Memorial Building in favour of Parliament, after the Parliament Buildings fire of 1916. Fortunately the Parliamentary Library survived the fire and became the cardinal point of reference for Moshe Safdie's Great Hall.

The twin-birth of the National Gallery and the Royal Canadian Academy in 1880 followed by 20 years the foundation of the Art Association of Montreal and preceded by 20 that of the Art Museum of Toronto. Confederation was sealed in 1867 and Queen Victoria made Ottawa capital of the Dominion. While the national collections of 40,000 paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, video works, films and decorative arts have been acquired, donated, exhibited, published, interpreted and extensively toured as this century progressed, the provision of an appropriate architectural environment for permanent display and public enjoyment has not been realized until now in the national capital. The National Gallery's collections and programmes have come first, the building second.

Eric Brown, an Englishman, brother of Sir Arnesby Brown, Royal Academician, was the first director of the gallery from 1911 to his death in 1939, having arrived in Ottawa as curator, at the instigation of Sir Edmund Walker, in 1910. In preparing the groundwork for the construction of a new building to celebrate the gallery's centennial in 1980, Jean Boggs, with the help of staff, wrote in 1975 a manuscript entitled A Policy for a National Gallery, later called The Development of a National Gallery, which, regrettably, was never published. It documented the extraordinary activity and continuity of the Brown years, which set down the roots of so much Gallery programming since: national lecture tours

by Brown, Arthur Lismer of the Group of Seven and W.G. Constable; the printing of reproductions for sale at nominal cost; publications by Lismer on individual works in the collection; the beginning of tours for schoolchildren and between 1938 and 1940 an experimental education programme with Arthur Lismer, financed equally by the gallery and the Carnegie Corporation. Brown was an active supporter of the Group of Seven, eliciting strong protest from the Royal Canadian Academy, while also acquiring the great Piero di Cosimo Vulcan and Aeolus. In 1938 he organized the exhibition "A Century of Canadian Art" for the Tate Gallery in London and, in one of the first telecasts on art anywhere, Brown spoke about the exhibition on the BBC. Kenneth Clark, later such a successful television performer himself, wrote of Brown: "He understood painting as an artist."[5] Emily Carr wrote to his widow Maud after his death: "I owe him so much, for I was overwhelmed by despair about my work when he came West and pulled me out and made me start again."[6] It was the anthropologist Marius Barbeau who introduced Eric Brown to the work of Emily Carr.

The English curator and scholar W.G. Constable ("W.G.," as he was affectionately called by generations of students and friends) made an exceptional contribution to gallery affairs as counsellor to Brown and to his four successors as director.[7] When Brown, in 1932, had written to him about the controversy his support of the Group of Seven had provoked, W.G. replied: "Personally I do not think the intelligent study of old masters can be divorced from the study of modern work and I hold that each branch of activity stimulates and helps the other."[8]

One of the first Group of Seven oils to enter the collection, whose vigorous spontaneity and shocking immediacy would later so enrage academic circles, bringing about A.Y. Jackson's resignation from the Royal Canadian Academy, was The Red Maple of 1914 by "A.Y." himself. It was bought the year it was painted. For Brown, there was a unique communion between artists of the Group and their subject. He once stated: "these apostles of the decorative landscape have gone forth into the wilds of Canadian nature and have found a veritable wonderland which holds them enthralled."[9]

Appointed in 1939, the successor to Eric Brown and first Canadian-born director of the gallery was Harry Orr McCurry. He joined the institution in 1919, serving as Secretary to the Gallery's Board of Trustees for 20 years. Before his retirement in 1955, McCurry had secured the touchstone acquisitions of paintings from the Prince of Liechtenstein's collection, which might have led, in 1967, to the purchase of Leonardo da Vinci's Portrait of Ginevra dei Benci now in Washington. Under McCurry, films on A.Y. Jackson and Tom Thomson were made with the National Film Board, founded in 1939; hundreds of thousands of reproductions were distributed and sold; in co-operation with the CBC a series of broadcasts on outstanding Canadian artists--called Adventures

in Canadian Painting--was produced for schools and related reproductions were supplied for one and a half cents each; the gallery took a leading role in the launching of the magazine Canadian Art in 1943. McCurry, in 1947, helped to establish national museological standards by accepting election as the first President of the Canadian Museums Association.

Alan Jarvis, sculptor, impresario and the first director of the gallery to have taken formal art historical studies, held the position from 1955 to 1959. Jarvis built upon the strength of the collections of English art established through the contributions of Lord Beaverbrook's Canadian War Memorials deposited in 1921 and Vincent Massey's gifts of English paintings made between 1946 and 1952. Jarvis supported many innovations: the publication of catalogues of the permanent collection with the University of Toronto Press; the establishment of a proper conservation laboratory under Dr. Nathan Stolow, a Canadian trained at the University of London, and Mervyn Ruggles, restorer at the gallery since 1938; the appointment of gallery liaison officers to represent the institution across Canada, following a conference called by the gallery in Vancouver; the formation of a Universities Art Association, following a conference called by the gallery in Ottawa to formulate plans for museum training; the formation of a Canadian University Students Art Committee following a McGill-Université de Montréal student-organized exhibition opened at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts by Governor General Vincent Massey. In 1957 Jarvis did 12 talks on CBC television called The Things We See. In 1958 he assisted in the founding of the National Gallery Association, now called the Friends of the National Gallery of Canada.

Long a member of the gallery's Board of Trustees and its chairman from 1948 to 1952, Vincent Massey was one of the gallery's most significant patrons and donors. He was also Chairman, with Most Reverend George-Henri Lévesque, of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences between 1949 and 1951. It was a happy coincidence that the French planner Jacques Gréber's Plan for the National Capital of 1950 helped secure, with the Massey-Lévesque Report, a decision for a new gallery building on Cartier Square. But Massey is also to be remembered as an outstanding donor, whose gifts of English art and later, by bequest, of Canadian art, have brought distinction to the national collections.

Douglas Duncan presented to the National Gallery important gifts from the Douglas Duncan Collection and the Milne-Duncan Bequest in 1970, which included 224 David Milnes and 206 L.L. Fitzgeralds. The gifts of Duncan, and of Dr. J.M. MacCallum's Group of Seven pictures before him, were a further development of Eric Brown's commitment to modern Canadian art, fully supported as it was at the time by the gallery's first Board Chairman Sir Edmund

Walker. It is in this way that invaluable resources of Canadian art have been assembled, which the gallery has since catalogued, published, interpreted and circulated--which have formed the basis of so much scholarship and criticism in Canadian art by Harper, Hubbard, Hill, Ostiguy, Porter, Reid, Théberge and Trudel--all curators at one time--Charlie Hill being very much still with us--at the National Gallery of Canada.

Robert Hubbard wrote in 1973 in his obituary for Kathleen Fenwick: "For many years the name of Kathleen Fenwick has been synonymous with the arts in Canada." Kathleen came from England in 1928 and was for 40 years, under five directors, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the National Gallery. The Popham-Fenwick Catalogue of European Drawings, published in 1965, gives some indication of the quality of her contribution. Personally and professionally Kathleen Fenwick warmly welcomed and encouraged hundreds of Canadian, American and European scholars and collectors. With Donald Buchanan she was founding editor of Canadian Art. She was vitally interested in Inuit Art, an adviser in 1946 to the Canadian delegation to the first UNESCO conference, and Chairman of the Canadian Film Awards from 1958 to 1973.

Donald Buchanan, Kathleen Fenwick and Dr. Nathan Stolow were all part of the heroic achievements of Expo '67. But Expo '67's Fine Arts Gallery (now the Musée d'art contemporain in Montreal) would never have been possible had not the gallery's move to more viable quarters in the Lorne Building already been made under the direction of Buchanan and Fenwick, Hubbard and Jarvis. Buchanan was the gallery's Associate Director to Alan Jarvis from 1955 to 1960, and it was during his tenure that photography became an important part of the Ottawa and national programme, featuring such exhibitions as "The Family of Man" from the Museum of Modern Art and "Henri Cartier-Bresson" organized by the American Federation of Arts. An ardent photographer and an urbane writer, he is also to be remembered for his role as Secretary in the late 1940s of the National Industrial Design Committee, later Council. For a time in 1960, the Council, or Design Centre, was housed in the Lorne Building before its transfer to the Ministry of Trade and Commerce. Finally, it was Buchanan who, in 1958, oversaw the building of the Canadian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Bob Hubbard, with a doctorate in art history, joined the gallery as Curator of Canadian Art in 1947 and retired in the late 1970s, as did Mervyn Ruggles, the gallery's senior conservator, who had arrived in 1938. Perhaps the poignancy and heroism underlying the extraordinary continuity of the gallery lay in the quiet and unpretentious genius of this handful of directors and staff, in their scholarly depth, range of activity and fine eye and their enthusiastic sharing of the love of art with others. Bob Hubbard made a phenomenal contribution with the permanent collection

catalogues of a generation ago and to the development of one of the best fine arts libraries in the country.

On the 22nd of May 1959, Vincent Massey laid the cornerstone of the Lorne Building named after the gallery's founder, which, in another form on another site, was to have been the institution's permanent home. It was Charles Comfort, painter, teacher and President of the Royal Canadian Academy, who began the gallery's days in the Lorne, opened on 17 February 1960 by Prime Minister John Diefenbaker. During Comfort's directorship, Borduas's great 3+4+1 1956 and Riopelle's monumental triptych Pavane, 1954, were purchased, as were three Spencer-Churchill paintings from a spectacular Christie's auction in London. Under Comfort the library continued to grow, film strips on Canadian artists were made with the National Film Board and the Canadian Centre for Films on Art was established. He encouraged the formation of the Canadian Art Museums Directors' Organization (called CAMDO) in 1964.

On 4 May 1966, on the eve of Canada's Centennial, Judy Lamarsh announced to the House of Commons the appointment of the Degas scholar, museum curator and art historian, Dr. Jean Sutherland Boggs, as director. Earlier a pupil of Comfort's, Jean Boggs was to give the gallery, with the support of the staff she found and the many more she recruited--from French and English and multicultural Canada--ten years of superlative acquisitions, exhibitions which toured nationally and internationally, publications and educational programmes in both official languages, placing the institution firmly and proudly at the forefront of North-American art museums and galleries, setting exemplary standards of scholarship and showmanship. It is of particular interest that Boggs came to Ottawa soon after airing with the CBC--as Curator of the Art Gallery of Toronto--a series of 13 radio talks called Listening to Pictures, accompanied by an illustrated text published with the National Gallery. Again in the tradition of Brown and Jarvis, she would work in 1971 with gallery curators on 15 television programmes made for ETV Ontario.

During Boggs's time, the Lorne Building's Canadian galleries were expanded and improved, finally resulting in displays that were both luminous and coherent. In my memory, the Lorne Building was never better than with Brydon Smith's "Dan Flavin" show of 1969, later exhibited at the Vancouver Art Gallery. It was Jean Boggs and Brydon Smith who opened the eyes of the Gallery to acquisitions of major contemporary American art. It is fitting that the Flavin exhibition illuminated its space so brilliantly and so hauntingly.

Another great moment at the Lorne was Governor-General Jules Léger's twin opening of the "Ozias Leduc" and "Silver in New France" exhibitions organized by Jean-René Ostiguy and Jean Trudel

respectively. Léger's words that marvellous night, 31 January 1974, were an inscription to be emblazoned on all galleries of art:

> Que, en outre, ces collections fassent revivre le passé par des formes qui sont attrayantes, belles, des caresses pour la main et pour le regard, alors que nous atteignons une des joies pures que nous réserve l'héritage de l'homme, celle où passe l'esprit, la rencontre de la beauté qui est création du moment et de l'histoire qui en est le prolongement.[11]

Many of you will remember Boggs's, Brieger's, Montpetit's and Verdier's "Art and the Courts" and Martin's and Druick's "Fantin-Latour" exhibitions at the Lorne from 1972 and 1983 respectively. "Art and the Courts" inspired two films by the National Film Board co-ordinated by then Assistant Director Joseph Martin.

The Gallery's Expo '67 pavilion was a unique example of the institution's national programme. At the same time, the gallery co-ordinated "Sculpture '76" in Toronto, organized by Dorothy Cameron and shown in front of Toronto's new city hall. These events were unprecedented manifestations of one of the major objectives of the Marquis of Lorne in 1880.

Internationally, in 1969-70, in honour of the just retired Kathleen Fenwick, the Gallery circulated to London, Paris and Florence selections of its European drawings.

One of the Lorne Building's most sentimental events was Governor General Roland Michener's opening on 23 January 1969 of Mr. and Mrs. H.R. Jackman's centennial gift of the MacCallum-Jackman Georgian Bay Cottage Group of Seven paintings, which have come to light again on Sussex Drive.

Sufficient tribute can never be paid to Mervyn Ruggles and to gallery preparators, whose eyes and hands are in fact and indeed the inestimable guardians of the national heritage. It was also Ruggles who, in the later 1970s, supervised a similar but technically more demanding transfer of Mr. and Mrs William Croscup's Painted Room from Granville Ferry, Nova Scotia, to the Lorne and, finally, to Nepean Point.

Dr. Nathan Stolow should also be remembered for establishing a leading research laboratory at the gallery and maintaining environmental and logistical standards for the protection and movement of works of art. He was the founder of the Canadian Conservation Institute. Without the work of Stolow, Ruggles, Grant and their staff there would have been no curatorially responsible national and international touring programmes. Without the Workshop's famous red National Gallery cases there would have been, for the works of art, no home away from home.

Gallery open houses at the Lorne Building, run by the Friends of the National Gallery as "Friends Days" have brought visitors behind the scenes with tremendous success. Volunteer Friends docents have been invaluable in supporting the gallery's education and tour programmes.

Education programming at the Gallery, since Lismer's day, has always been a central feature of its activities in Ottawa and across Canada. Many of such programmes are related to special loan exhibitions, such as the Gutenberg Press demonstration for the Veste Coburg exhibit of 1982 and the music room for the Fantin-Latour exhibition of 1983.

The presence of artists at Gallery exhibitions and openings in Ottawa or elsewhere has encouraged and inspired curators and staff in bringing their works before the public. In June 1975, the Art Gallery of Ontario opened Charles Hill's "Canadian Painting of the 1930s," which toured seven Canadian cities, with artists André Bieler, Paraskeva Clark, Carl Schaefer, Yvonne McKague Housser, Louis Muhlstock and Isabel McLaughlin in attendance. The artists Michael Snow and Guido Molinari together opened, at the Lorne Building in July 1973, the Boucherville exhibition organized by Brydon Smith and Pierre Théberge.

Crucial for the dissemination of the national collections are the gallery's publications and bookstore staff, who, in both official languages over many years, have brought image and text, reproduction and book to viewer and reader far and wide, with immeasurable results.

This essay has attempted to sketch for the reader the perspective, in some of its dimensions, of the National Gallery's history and programme which led to the architectural programmes for new buildings in the 1950s and the 1970s. The campaign of the 1970s was led by Jean Boggs and resulted in a fine building concept but a missed opportunity for the celebration of the gallery's centennial in 1980. Perhaps it was providential if not inevitable that Miss Boggs should return in 1982, appointed by the government--in the persons of Prime Minister Trudeau and the Honourable Francis Fox on 18 February--to undertake the construction of not only one but two projects: the National Gallery and the Canadian Museum of Civilization. One year later, the government announced the selection of sites and architects for each: Moshe Safdie and John Parkin for the gallery on Nepean Point and Douglas Cardinal for the museum across the Ottawa--the Alexandra Bridge linking the two.

Moshe Safdie's first drawings for the gallery capture at the outset his response to the programme--in the form, in his words, of "a giant candelabrum in the heart of the community." "Every

thing about its design," he wrote, "proclaims openness, the generosity of an act of invitation."[21] The footprint or plan, together with the stereoscopic view in elevation of the building, indicated a clear L-shaped orientation of the galleries on a bisecting east-west, north-south axis, turning on the Great Hall, with a wing for museological services to the north, overlooking the Gatineau. Educational, auditorium, cafeteria, bookstore and public reception facilities were placed immediately adjacent to the entrance, above a parking garage. The recovered and restored Rideau Chapel was located at the centre of the Canadian galleries.

The side and centrally vaulted Canadian galleries at the main but lower levels were to be illuminated ingeniously by light wells and clerestories. Courtyards and walkways would provide relief, orientation and an invitation to go on or to return. More modern, rectangular spaces were to be provided for contemporary art on two levels, where George Segel's Gas Station and Nancy Graves's Camels (two of which were given by the Bronfman family) are now shown, where art performances will be given and where video art is regularly screened.

Moshe Safdie's spacious and elegant geometry would bring new light on Tom Thomson's archetypal Northern River and Borduas's magical Sous le vent de l'ile in the main Canadian galleries; and on Rembrandt's ageless Old Testament Heroine, which Mervyn Ruggles restored, and Benjamin West's Pietà of the Death of Wolfe in the upper European rooms. Safdie's building also created new space for special loan exhibitions, which would allow the permanent collections to be constantly on view. The first such exhibition in the new building was "Degas," organized by Jean Boggs for the National Gallery, the Metropolitan in New York and the Réunion des musées nationaux of France. The Chevaux de course pastel and the oil of the Femme à l'ombrelle from the gallery's collection were included in this spectacular show.

Prints, drawings and photography galleries on the upper level, with artificial light only, would present rotating exhibits of these media, adjacent to a permanent Inuit gallery. The 19th century Rideau Chapel, with the help of the Friends of the National Gallery, would find a new place in Canadian architectural history and offer an enchanting ambience for display of the Birks Silver gift. Its acoustics would provide an ideal setting for concerts.

And what of future programmes? The gallery would showcase, in the fall of 1988, the Winnipeg Art Gallery's "Ivan Eyre" exhibition and in the spring of 1989, the Art Gallery of Ontario's "Paterson Ewen," to which the gallery would lend its Gibbous Moon.

After opening at the Vancouver Art Gallery in the fall of 1988 as part of the gallery's national programme, a masterpiece exhibition of drawings from the collection would be shown in Ottawa

in the winter of 1988-1989, before travelling to Washington's National Gallery of Art to mark the opening of the new Canadian embassy there the following spring. It would include Thomas Davies's View on the River la Puce near Quebec and Durer's Nude Woman with a Staff.

The gallery would mount in 1989 a major photography exhibition of the work of Yousuf Karsh, organized by Jim Borcoman, to mark the sesquicentennial of the medium. Since 1967, the gallery's photographs collection, a special initiative of the Boggs period, generously supported by Phyllis Lambert, has become under Borcoman's curatorship one of the finest in the world. The current MOMA Cartier-Bresson: Early Work would also be presented at the gallery in 1989. In addition, the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography will, in new quarters, soon be offering its own programme in Ottawa, while continuing to circulate exhibitions across Canada and abroad.

The opportunities in Canadian art are promising everywhere, as collections develop across the country and Canadian art history with them. The new Canadian Museum of Civilization opens June 1989. In 1927, Marius Barbeau and Eric Brown worked together in the Victoria Memorial Building to organize an exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art, to which Emily Carr lent 26 pictures. Might there be a reprise as the new National Gallery and the new Museum of Civilization dialogue across the Ottawa, one of Canada's oldest waterways?

---

1. Roderick Stewart, Bethune (Toronto: PaperJacks, 1973), p. 67.

2. Jean Sutherland Boggs, The National Gallery of Canada (Oxford University Press, 1971), p. vii.

3. Etienne Gilson, Painting and Reality (Meridian, 1957), p. 271.

4. André Malraux, The Voices of Silence, trans. Stuart Gilbert (Doubleday, 1953), p. 639.

5. F. Maud Brown, Breaking Barriers ([Ottawa] 1964), p. 111.

6. Ibid, p. 104.

7. In 1931 and 1956, "W.G." wrote two important reports on the gallery and its national role and in 1958 he was engaged by Alan Jarvis, then Director, to launch a museum training scheme supported by the gallery and the recently established Canada Council. As a beneficiary of this programme in 1959-1960, I remain deeply grateful to both the gallery and the council.

8. Boggs, op.cit. p. 38.

9. Boggs, op.cit. p. 13.

10. Sixth Annual Review of the National Gallery of Canada 1973-1974, (Ottawa 1974) p. 9.

11. From an unpublished manuscript, furnished at the time by Government House with Governor General Jules Léger's consent.

12. Moshe Safdie, "Design Statement (1983)," in A New Building for the National Gallery of Canada (pamphlet) (Ottawa: Canada Museums Corporation, 1984).

DESCRIBING THE ORIGINS OF EVERYTHING WITH EXAMPLES: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCES

Alan R. Emery
Director, National Museum of Natural Sciences

In 1968, I was confronted with an examination question on the final of my PhD that made me sit up and take notice. It asked simply: "Describe the origins of everything with examples." That question has come back to haunt me in the last four years as Director of the National Museum of Natural Sciences, because that is precisely what any comprehensive museum of natural history attempts. Canada's National Museum of Natural Sciences (NMNS) is no exception, but there are both constraints and biases that define the manner in which the question is answered. I have a special role to play as one of the current custodians of the museum in facing the challenge of the future in a society changing in character, needs and capabilities as well as skills.

The Museum's purpose is, with special but not exclusive reference to Canada, to increase knowledge of, respect for, appreciation of and interest in our natural world, by communicating our collection-based and related understanding of nature so as to change people's attitudes and behaviour to create a balanced relationship between man and nature.

The museum seeks, through its own programmes and by assisting others to discover what is or has been contained in the universe; to collect examples of natural history and to maintain these so as to preserve those of significance and importance for posterity. By using these natural objects, and other means, the museum seeks to question and understand the principles and mechanisms by which the natural universe operates; and to inform all people of this understanding through a wide variety of media, but especially using real objects.

The important words and sequence here is discover; collect; preserve; understand; and inform. The definition of our role at this stage is not limited by the realities of our human, physical or financial resources. That limitation is real but is dealt with by setting up priorities and programmes.

All of our functions are linked and mutually dependent on each other. It would not be possible to fulfil the role of National Museum of Natural History without all functions being present. The unique information that a museum can offer is derived from the research involving its collections, or natural objects or processes represented by the collections. A national museum is the only

museum that must provide an overview and co-ordinative role for the country. It has as well the special responsibility of representing the country in the community of other national museums of the world. Finally, all derived sciences such as genetics, physiology, ecology, many aspects of medicine, commercial geology and renewable resource management require collection-based knowledge to be able to function. One of our key roles is to be a platform for the work and research carried out by other institutions.

What do these magic words imply? The museum and its staff are agents of discovery, constantly seeking to find out and to describe previously unknown species, distribution patterns and relationships. We carry out basic research in two essential areas--the naming and describing of new species, and creating new concepts and theories about natural interrelationships--exciting, demanding work of importance to everyone.

There are some spin-off roles that result from this: we are ambassadors to other countries by reason of our work there. We define our own country because of our descriptive and cataloguing work. We are often an early warning system for changes in our environment because we have an inventory of the past in our collections. Our scientists are often role models for the young, both because they are directly in contact with them and also because the scientists are often in the news.

Resulting from this research and discovery are the material collections. The museum must manage and care for this collection as well as participate in field collecting expeditions, accepting donations and purchasing significant materials.

There are two essentially different preservation functions. One is the care, conservation and maintenance of the physical objects in the collection, the other is the definition of that which is heritage material.

The museum is a creator of new knowledge and understanding about our natural universe and how it operates. In general we use the scientific method, the same way any scientist does, beginning with observations and questions formulated as hypotheses, proceeding to the collection of data and then the analysis of that data. Once analyzed and dissected, the concepts are synthesized out of the data analyzed. This is the most difficult stage, yet it is here where the greatest contributions are made.

Most people think of exhibits when they hear the word museum. Up to now, anyone unfamiliar with the back rooms of museums was probably a little surprised that I have yet to talk about exhibits. We are indeed communicators of information. We communicate with our scientific colleagues through the standard media of technical journals, lectures at conferences, formal visits and a network of

exchange of reprints. We communicate with the general public in an enormous number of ways, the most familiar of which is the exhibition of real specimens in the "museum" building. Because the environment is informal, the displays to work must be effective communicators, but must also be entertaining and attractive to the visiting public. The displays can be didactic, fun, interactive, passive or truly hands-on. In our case, because we are a national museum and have our nation and other nations as our audience, not all of whom can come to Ottawa, the exhibitions are often constructed in such a way as to be capable of travelling from one school, community centre, library or museum to another.

We also have organized tours, expeditions and encounters, and provide support to natural history groups. Finally there is a formal part to our education programme; we provide an educational opportunity that is linked to the curriculum of the schools.

In unfamiliar ways, perhaps, we are a source of general information. People write, call or drop in to ask specific questions or have something identified. We are locations for associated cultural events. The museum publishes extensively in the trade with popular books, games and puzzles, and is moving rapidly into the areas of television, radio and film to reach many people who would not dream of going to a museum under normal circumstances.

Sounds wonderful, and it is. It is an exciting place to be and in which to work. We have new discoveries all the time, new programmes to talk about them, and thousands of people who are always interested.

But it is not always easy to be this way or to convince the powers that fund museums that this is the way it should be. Let me list a few of the major issues:

Collections and Research

1) Should basic research be done in museums? (I do not mean research to put on an exhibit, but rather, real research with new concepts and theories as the end product.)

2) Should collecting and preserving be limited to "exhibit" materials?

3) Should we cover all natural sciences or just a few?

4) Many of our best scientists go to the United States or abroad because of poor treatment in Canada--how can we play a role in stopping this brain drain?

5) Universities have been getting rid of collections for the last decade. The professors no longer have the resources, therefore no longer have the interest in museum style research. Will the academic community cease to produce scientists capable of doing taxonomic research?

Administration

1) Should a national museum rely entirely on government support, or should it earn and solicit money from the private sector?

2) In our "arm's length" relationship, how long is the arm? Just how little influence should the government have on our areas of research and dissemination of our conclusions?

Informing

1) Should we reach out more to Canadians? If so, is this part of our mandate and thus should it require funding? Should this be at the expense of visitors to the main exhibition building?

2) Given the growth of both couch potatoes and travelling tourists, where should we put our emphasis--in the home or in the museum? that is, publish more books and games, or offer more tours and expeditions?

3) Today's young are not restricted to reading as I was for entertainment. In fact, statistics suggest that reading is fast declining as a skill in Canadians. Given this, should we abandon books for television monitors?

4) Computer technology, with the advent of fractal equations, will soon be capable of so accurately faking images, no one will know if the scene was real or fabricated. Holographs can look so real a viewer is completely fooled. Can these be useful or are they always destructive in the demonstration of "real" things?

National

1) The concept of "national" to Canadians: does it mean an introverted, self examination, bounded by the geographical location of political boundaries, or does it mean our nation in the context of the world? Is Canada a collective of regions--or is it a strong centralized concept? What role should the national museum have in shaping the definition of Canada?

2) What about the incredible fact that there is no federal support for non-federal museum scientists, nor for collections of natural history material in museums? Should the safeguarding of Canada's natural heritage collections be the entire responsibility of the provinces and municipalities? One fallout of this has been that none of our TYPE material in neonatology (specimens on which a new species is based and which are to be kept for all time) have any special safe location; indeed, there is no regulation that suggests Canada should even keep its own TYPES.

3) What about the future: with the world's biological diversity falling at an alarming rate, what will be the effects? Is there going to be any capacity in Canada to be able to answer this question--a question essentially based in evolutionary theory? What should our role as the national museum be in speaking to our government, or to informing others?

My intention in the next few pages is to explain the development of the museum and how it came to be what it is today,

and how we, the present custodians of the museum, intend to face the challenge of describing the origins of everything, with examples.

The explorers from Europe who first came on Canada's shores were driven by economic demands for new natural resources. They discovered vast riches in the water, on the land and beneath the ground. In fact, it is those naturally occurring riches that still support our country, and which allow us to be one of the wealthy nations of the world despite our impoverished capacity to produce our own manufactured goods. How long that good fortune will last remains to be seen, but it is nonetheless true that our heritage is steeped in natural history.

In 1842, Canada set up a Geological Survey of Canada (GSC), by virtue of a 1,500 pound sterling addition to the estimates. In 1845, an Act of Parliament called for the establishment of a museum to include biological and cultural artifacts as well as geological materials. In 1852, the museum moved to the former residence of the Honourable Peter McGill on Gabriel Street in Montreal, where it remained until 1880. It then moved to Sussex Drive in Ottawa. In 1867, with Confederation, the definition of "Canada" vastly expanded the territory for which the GSC was responsible. Responding to this, in 1868, a new Act was passed providing 30,000 dollars annually for five years, establishing a Geological Museum open to the public. In 1877, it became the Canadian Museum of Natural History. By 1886, the number of visitors was nearly 15,000. By this year there were well established departments of mineralogy, geology, palaeontology and biology, with a fair staff of artists, taxidermists, preparators and other trained assistants. In 1905, a museum building dedicated to and named after Queen Victoria was conceived and construction of the Victoria Memorial Museum Building (VMMB) was completed in 1911. The building housed the GSC and its Museum Branch. The building was clearly intended to be a museum of natural history, celebrating that fact by the inclusion in its design of bas relief sculptures of animals around its roof lintels and capping the doorway with a grand moose head.

An accident of history had a significant effect on the Museum of Natural History: the Houses of Parliament burned to the ground in 1916, and the VMMB became the site of the Prime Minister's office, the Senate and the House of Commons. Some claim the sign over the door to the House of Commons was "Invertebrate Fossils." These exotic activities in the building displaced all of the museum's collections except for anthropology, the library and some basement occupants, to temporary quarters around the city. During these wartime years the museum work came to a virtual standstill. In 1920, a directorship of the museum was created separate from the GSC. The divisions of anthropology and biology were placed in the museum, and the other divisions remained under the directorship of the GSC. Collins comments,

> It afforded a greater amount of directional attention to museum problems, but it also had the disadvantage of accentuating the distinction between the divisions of biology and anthropology, engaged solely in museum work, and the divisions of geology, mineralogy and palaeontology, simultaneously occupied with both Museum and Survey work. It gave verisimilitude to a notion that the Museum was concerned with only two branches of natural science instead of all.[1]

It is without doubt that had the director of the time reacted quickly and decisively to the significance of this observation, today's National Museum of Natural Sciences would not be in the partially crippled scientific condition that it now finds itself. One other decision, made in 1910 by the Director of the time, R.W. Brock, had a similar constraining influence on the museum and quite possibly on the nature of Canada's view of itself in the world. He said,

> The Museum will, therefore, be a complete museum of natural history. ... It is the intention to restrict the museum to Canadian material (except in educational collections where necessary objects may be lacking in Canadian collections) in order to make it, first of all, the great Canadian Museum, whose collections in Canadian material will surpass all others.[2]

The combined effect of these decisions has been to create a national museum that has had great difficulty in conceiving of its role as a truly national museum, one of a world community of national museums concerned with the origins of everything. Because of the unclear view of what a museum was, and the proprietary interests of the GSC (the museum's "parent") and the Department of Agriculture, as well as accidents of history, the museum did not keep all of its collections. It lost such important areas as insects (most of the living species of animals are insects) and invertebrate fossils (most of the animals that are fossilized are invertebrates). This has severely hampered its capacity to serve the nation.

In hindsight, Collins provided an inaccurate forecast of the future in 1927 as the National Museum of Canada was founded. "The National Museum of Canada has always been a natural history museum and will presumably continue as such, since the Government already maintains a separate museum of art, the National Gallery of Canada, and a separate museum of history, the Public Archives."[3] In fact, in 1968, the National Museum of Canada became the National Museums of Canada, and this new concept omitted the Public Archives, folded in the National Gallery of Canada, created a new museum of history called the National Museum of Man, and also created a museum of

science and technology, essentially a specialty history museum focused on the history of science and technology.

Collins went on to say,

> Natural history museums have ... three major purposes: 1) to collect and serve as a repository for natural history material of scientific or economic interest; 2) to educate the public concerning the natural history and natural resources by exhibiting specimens, by writings and lectures, and in other ways; 3) to conduct researches in the natural sciences. These appear to be the main reasons for the existence of the National Museum of Canada.[4]

While this has essentially been the role of the NMNS, it has been a struggle to defend the notion that the museum should be engaged in research; for some reason, this has often been considered irrelevant, especially if it went outside of the political boundaries of Canada. This parochial view harkens back to earlier decisions, and ignores the plain fact that neither rocks, nor plants, nor animals pay the slightest heed to political boundaries.

Collins presaged the skinny relationship with governmental organizations not administratively part of the museum noting the lack of material coming from agencies such as Agriculture and Fisheries. What he could not know at the time was that the museum would not stay within the same department as the Geological Survey and thus did not resist enough the "split" of functions between the two. In fact, the GSC later migrated amongst several different departments. During these peregrinations, the split collections changed status dramatically. With the formation of the National Museum of Canada, it was "theoretically ... now a repository for all natural history material collected and no longer needed by other federal organizations and for similar material donated by the public."[5] Although this was stated to be the case, it has never been used as a working definition and collections have essentially remained vulnerable in other departments, or, worse, have been discarded.

Several collections are of particular interest: entomology, vascular plants, fungi (mycology), invertebrate fossils, plant fossils and the mineralogical collection, and can be used to illustrate the shifting intentions and effects of proprietary interest on the history of the museum and the country. Beginning with the fossils and rocks: although the museum began as the Geological Survey, it was designated as a separate entity in 1927, still in the same department. In 1950, the survey and the museum were separated administratively, the museum becoming a part of the Department of Resources and Development, the GSC remaining in the

Department of Mines and Technical Surveys. The Survey, however, did not physically leave the VMMB until 1959. In the administrative separation, there was a clear intent on the part of the directors of the two institutions to separate the activities. Alcock (NMC) wrote to Hume (GSC) on June 28, 1950:

> 2) The National Museum shall be concerned with the investigation and study of the natural resources, natural history, anthropology, geology and palaeontology of Canada from the national viewpoint, and in making the results of such work available to the public by means of exhibits, publications, lectures and other suitable ways.[6]

Hume replied on August 11, 1950:

> Since the GSC makes field and laboratory studies of the geology, palaeontology and mineral deposits and resources of Canada, I think item 2 of your draft may be amended to read: "The National Museum of Canada shall be responsible for exhibits illustrating the natural history and natural resources of Canada."[7]

Thus, the intent of the museum was to do research in these fields, whereas the intent of the GSC was that the museum not do research in these fields. In 1965, an anonymous document noted that there had been no explicit written understanding about the roles of the two organizations in the field of palaeontology, but summarizes as follows:

> In the field of invertebrate palaeontology, the GSC is solely responsible for collecting and research on fossils, as well as the curating and storing of all type and reference collections. In the field of vertebrate palaeontology, the national museum is responsible for collection and research on vertebrate fossil, and maintains the type and reference collections.[8]

Thus the original philosophical split of functions (Hume and Alcock debate) was not realized, instead it came to a split on discipline. To illustrate the difficulty this created, a letter from the Director of GSC (Fortier, 1970), in reply to Lemieux (Director of NMNS) requesting display material for the new galleries, states: "Our supply of museum-type fossil specimens, however, is limited--the best is the rarest."[9] The aims of the GSC were not and are not museological, nor should they be. An attempt was made in 1961, two years after the GSC physically left the VMMB, to rationalize the use and growth of the mineralogical collection. Without quoting the documents, the essence of the arrangement was to endow the GSC with the "Systematic Reference Series" of the National Collection, and the museum with the "Display Series." Furthermore,

each was to contribute to the other. Within a decade it was clear the arrangement was not working. There was co-operation between the scientists of the two groups; however, little material changed hands. With other agencies the situation was worse. To quote the curator of the day:

> We try to foster the transfer of such materials to the Collection when these officers have completed their own studies, but have had only moderate success. ... There should be a firm policy requiring that all natural material collected in the course of projects sponsored or funded by the federal government be turned over to the curators of the national collections for ultimate disposition.[10]

That sentiment, by the way, is even stronger now as the agency collections become increasingly vulnerable with the emphasis on project-based research. The original separation of function between display and research also became unworkable, and today the museum is a well established research unit with an international reputation. The presentation of a state-of-the-art mineralogical exhibition to the public is clearly not possible without research experts on staff. Thus, the original intent of the separation was not realized here either. The effects are felt today. Our attempts to acquire a major collection of gems and minerals for Canada in one private sale is severely compromised and made more difficult by the GSC's proprietary interest and supposed "ownership" of the rights to all "research" materials we at the NMNS might get in the purchase. The vendor is not at all comfortable with the prospect.

A somewhat different story is true of the insects, plants, and fungi. The entomology and plant collection which had been transferred to Agriculture very early from the GSC became a major programme with the hiring of James Fletcher in 1887 to the Experimental Farms Branch of the Department of Agriculture. The entomology collection was originally slated for the VMMB, but in 1917, when Parliament used the VMMB as the seat of government, the collection was moved to the Department of Agriculture where it is still retained. Thus, in this case, there was no philosophical rationale, only expediency. The result has been that the museum has never had any curatorial expertise in entomology until the last three years, when we began to accept donations of insect material. Thus, while Canadians enjoy a very capable identification service from the Agriculture experts, there is no capacity at the federal level to create state-of-the-art displays on insects--a class of animal that represents nearly 90 per cent of all the living species of animals on this planet. There is a growing tendency of the Agriculture entomologists to be directed to problem-solving research dealing with commercially valuable or pestiferous insects. While the aspirations of the scientists are firmly based in a

belief in the value of systematics, the history of government-held collections suggests they are ultimately at risk. The vascular plant collection was considered differently, and the "National Collection" (a broad-based collection) is considered to reside in the museum, while the Agriculture collection specializes in weeds and cultivars.

As I look at the history of these institutions, it is a wonder they have survived at all. In addition to the internecine warfare and territorial disputes, outside organizations have had a go at the museums. In 1951, the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, recommended that 1) the National Museum of Canada change its name to the Canadian Museum of Natural History, and that it be adequately funded; 2) there be established a museum to describe and record the development and history of Canadian peoples to be called the Canadian Historical Museum, to receive historical collections from federal agencies such as the Public Archives, and that they be given a fair share of the VMMB; 3) there be a Canadian Museum of Science to celebrate the history of science in Canada, and be administered by the NRC; 4) there be established a botanical garden under the department of Agriculture, a zoological garden under the Parks Branch and an aquarium under the Department of Fisheries.

They also commented incorrectly that the link between the scientific staff and the exhibits is tenuous at best, and that scientists do not exist to contribute to the exhibits, in fact would prefer to have nothing to do with exhibits. This did little to help the museum. The Commission went on to state that if a museum is to be more than a mere repository of objects of interest, there must be a close relationship between the research and the exhibits, but that this research does not need to be done in house. They further observed that the museum scientists tend to be cut off from the mainstream of research, and have limited support staff and facilities. All this is partially true. Their conclusion that the scientists would be better off in the Canadian Wildlife Service or the Department of Agriculture was extremely ill-advised. My suspicion is that this report nearly ruined the potential for there ever to be a strong national museum in the country. Our experience shows that if there is no researcher on staff, no exhibits get done in that discipline, so while the thesis that you don't have to have one on staff may sound reasonable, it does not work in practice.

With this as the prevailing wisdom, the government enacted the National Museums Act. Perhaps it is of importance that the Act was proclaimed on April Fools Day. Four museums were created, much along the lines of the Commission's report, and the NMNS administrative structure was born.

Twenty years after the 1951 Commission and three years after the NMC Act, the Science Council of Canada made some ruinous

recommendations.[11] In addition, they correctly observed that much of the systematics, morphology, plant and animal natural history, descriptive ecology, biogeography and palaeontology had not yet been done in Canada (still true today); that no other technologically progressive country, except possibly Australia, had such a high proportion of unstudied floral and faunal elements; and that the state of our National Museum deserved a particular comment because it was pathetic by old-world international standards. With this as a backdrop, they went on to suggest a dramatic change: Reduce the national museums to showplaces:

> The public display and showmanship jobs should be turned over to the cultural agencies ... Secretary of State. ... The largely technical jobs of identification should be set up ... to function in a fashion similar to a library ... with a network of national regional museums amalgamating all of the federal agencies involved in collections to create a large central repository [including the] superb Canada Department of Agriculture material on insects [to carry out the identifications as a service to universities and other research agencies, with all basic research left to universities].[12]

Furthermore they recommended that all of this "museum activity"--the identification service--be under the jurisdiction of the National Research Council. Talk about parochial, self-interested recommendations--how embarrassing!

This report was unquestionably influential, and judging from the bits of correspondence I was able to dig out of the files, it caused no small amount of consternation among the staff of the museum, the GSC and the Department of Agriculture. It failed, however, to gain acceptance for the specific recommendations. Certainly the need for regional centres capable of providing an identification service remains critical today. At the present time there is no federal funding available for support of natural history collections in museums, nor of the systematics research to be carried out in museums that makes them useful. So the recommendations, which could have been useful, failed in all respects. The universities do not provide a satisfactory identification service, and neither were any set up in the regions. In fact, it is interesting that in Canada there are approximately 1,800 museums of various disciplines. Of those 1800, only 3 are devoted entirely to natural history, and only 105 even claim to have a passing interest in natural history (about five per cent). For a country with the emphasis we have on natural resources, this is a pretty paltry showing. The distribution of major collections that can serve as identification sources is also quite limited still today. There are good federal collections in Ottawa at the Biosystematics Research Centre, the NMNS and the GSC. All the rest are provincial or more local. The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto

has good holdings and specialists. McGill in Montreal is still operating the Redpath Museum and the Lyman Entomological Museum, but is in serious difficulty. McMaster in Hamilton has a collection of arthropods, and the Tyrell Museum combined with the University of Calgary have good holdings in palaeontological materials. Except for Ottawa, and possibly Toronto, each is only sufficient in a narrow specialty and hardly serves the purposes that the Science Council envisioned.

In 1972, the Secretary of State, Gerard Pelletier, issued a new policy on museums in Canada, named the National Museums Policy. The name was unfortunate, because it implied the policy applied exclusively to the National Museums of Canada, which it did not--it was intended to deal with all Canadian museums. But it had the same regional, decentralized view as did the Science Council Report. The recommendations of the Science Council were clearly born of partisan interest on the part of the university representatives--they were divesting themselves of systematic collections, and here was a simple way of getting someone else to pay for the identification service they needed for university sciences, but could not themselves afford to maintain. The regionality of the Pelletier policy, however, was born of loftier philosophy. This was the time of the great populist, democratization politics. Elitism was under attack and egalitarian visions of equal access to the collections by all Canadians with the emphasis on stopping expenditures in Ottawa spawned the Museums Assistance Programme, the Canadian Conservation Institute and the National Inventory Programme. All of these were based on the idea that Canadians, all Canadians, deserved to benefit, not just those in Ottawa, or the few that at that time were perceived to visit Ottawa. (At the time, the impression was that fewer than 5 per cent of Canadians visit Ottawa in their lifetime.) Today it is more likely that 5 to 10 per cent visit Ottawa annually, and that between 50 and 60 per cent visit Ottawa in their lifetime, so Ottawa is a good location to be in touch with a maximum number of Canadians.

Unfortunately, within a year of the formation of the National Museums of Canada in 1968, the VMMB closed its doors for renovations. The renovations were extensive, and required five years to complete. Thus, for the entire beginnings of the new NMC, and for the first two years of the new policy, the National Museum of Natural Sciences and the Museum of Man were closed to the public. This was a very poor idea, and undoubtedly further exacerbated the resentment against the spending in Ottawa, when even the people of Ottawa apparently got nothing out of it. It is extremely difficult to reconstruct the internal events, but by 1980 the internal administration of the NMC was in great difficulty, and all four of the Directors resigned or retired early, apparently in protest. The NMNS had half of the VMMB for exhibit space, and the staff are still scattered in 12 other buildings.

In 1983, when I arrived as Director, I succeeded two acting directors. I was one of the four new Directors, however, and looked forward to being part of a team to build a strong national museum. This was clearly the government's intention as well; they had shored up the authority of the Secretary General, and within two years had called on the former Secretary of State, the father of the 1972 Museums Policy, to be Chairman of the Board. But even these measures failed to solve the problems.

In 1987 the government decided on the recommendations of a number of task forces to abandon the NMC and create four autonomous museums, of which the NMNS is to be one. A new policy is to be created as quickly as possible. In the research area, will the Federal Government include support to non-federal museums on a grander scale for natural history collections, identification services, systematic research? If so, will the few existing natural history museums be able to respond to the support needs by providing the services called for by the other university sciences, such as physiology, medicine, resource management, impact studies? Canada has been criticized for her poor showing in support of basic research amongst developed nations of the world. Is this an opportunity they will seize to change that showing? Within the federal agencies, there is a multitude of museum collections: the Minister commented that her survey had discovered some 131 collections in 48 departments, and noted a need to bring order to these. Considering the past attempts to do the same on a much smaller scale, and the sometimes Byzantine recommendations and relationships that have resulted, it is a burning question for the NMNS to discover what the government's intentions might be. Is it possible to create a safety net so that all natural heritage material in federal collections is screened by the NMNS once federal agencies have completed their work with the material? Is it rational to have museological functions in what are essentially non-museological agencies? In the public programming areas, now that the DOC has acquired national programmes, what will be the relationship to such things as the Travelling Exhibit Insurance Programme, the cultural initiatives Programmes? Does the government foresee a major increase in the Museum Assistance Programme grants, especially by enabling borrowers of travelling exhibits to apply for support (including from the national museums)? Right now the museum community can borrow from any except the nationals and gain support for the expenses incurred. It would be foolhardy of me to do more than just estimate what is most likely, and to chart a course for the future based on those likelihoods.

Within the next several months, the NMNS will have acquired most of the staff it is going to get from the breakup of the umbrella National Museums Corporation, and will comprise approximately 200 people (an increase of about 34 per cent, all in

administrative and "museum service" functions), the distribution of whom will be partly a reflection of the aftermath of decentralizing and readjusting to our new administrative freedom, as well of the skills that the people bring with them from what was the umbrella corporation. We will be in a state of flux and trying to adjust to the new situation. Thus we will certainly be making mistakes; some people will be capable of adjusting, others will not. Culturally, the emphasis will be on the future, on trying hard to define precisely what our new legislative and administrative corpus should be like, so that we can reach out to all Canadians, and respond to the call by the government to raise a proportion of our operating and other budgets from the private sector. This latter is a role entirely new to the national museums, except for windfall events.

There are major shortages in the complement of staff in the support sectors of the museum. We have essentially been in a "downsizing exercise" for the last three years due to governmental rules and restraints. In addition we do not have any curators in molluscs and several other major lower invertebrate groups, none in invertebrate fossils, none in insects, only one in birds, only three curators for all of the vascular plants and no curator of gems. Within public programmes our major shortages are that we have only one staff member to handle travelling exhibits, one person in charge of all publications and little or no capacity in modern electronic communication media.

The NMNS is going to be asked to become more self-sufficient, to include cost-recovery operations, engage in soliciting private sector funds and be business oriented in some ways such as running shops, restaurants, parking and charging admission fees, all as a means of gaining revenue. Will this be possible? Only if the legislation allows it. Today it is very difficult. Take a simple example: the government auditors tell me we cannot be seen to solicit a donation. We can accept one, just not ask for it. Well, it is pretty hard to fund raise without asking for donations! Or this example: a vendor offers you something at half price. If the item is on a "standing offer" with the government, the vendor can't invoice for less than the standard. Or, someone gives you a million dollars and says: "Here take this and hire a permanent curator of `x,' using the interest." You cannot do it because the government controls what are called PYs (person years). That is, they allow a body count, regardless of the cost or lack of cost. PYs become the currency--not salary dollars.

There are other peculiarities in the system of rewards and punishments for management style and end product. Another example may serve. Suppose you are in a business operation and have a manager who operates a million dollar shop with 20 staff members. The manager comes to you and says: "I have found a process to reduce the cost of production by 200,000 dollars, and it uses five

fewer people for a further saving of 100,000 dollars." In business, the manager would get a bonus or a raise, savings in salary and costs would be put back into product and profit increased. By contrast, in government, the manager has the 300,000 dollars deducted from his operations entirely, and because the staff is fewer, the allotment for staff support is further reduced. Finally now that the span of control is narrower and the scale of financial responsibility smaller, his classification is reduced and the salary red-circled against raises. In short he was punished for his innovation and initiatives. The cultural milieu in government is all wrong for business operations. It is, however, acceptable if the goal is control of process rather than encouragement of productivity.

Sometimes it is difficult to read the directions given us. For example, we were instructed, as were all government agencies, to try to recover costs to pay off the national debt. We decided to ask borrowers of our travelling exhibits, which are free of charge, to pay for the transportation costs. We also felt that it was fair for a national institute to be equidistant from all of the other museums in the country. To accomplish this minor miracle, we pro-rated the costs so each borrower paid the same. Complaints poured in to the Minister's office as well as our offices. Suddenly the government was not sure whether the imperative to cost recover was more important or less important than the imperative to reach out across the country. The two are essentially mutually exclusive in this case.

I could go on at some length about the crash course I have had in government philosophy in the last four years, but the bottom line is simple: if you want to be in an institution that encourages enterprise, risk-taking, creativity, innovation and business operations, stay out of the government.

This creates an incredible dilemma for the policy and legislative advisors in the case of our museums: they want us to be a part of government and yet at the same time to do all the things governments cannot allow us to do. As we approach this nexus in our development, we at the NMNS have been attempting many money-raising schemes, and have been continually breaking new ground with regulatory bodies. I give most of them credit for struggling to find ways for us to do as we have been instructed. If we have a few of these experiences behind us, we will be better equipped to describe what we should be like in the new legislation.

Within the next 18 months, we will have a new Act, a new Board of Trustees, a new mandate, a new set of responsibilities, and a new set of rules under which to operate. I do not yet know, nor will I know for some time, what the new Act will say, or what the Board will be charged to do (be a working/supportive Board or be a monitor and control group). I have no clear idea what the

government will agree should be our new mandate, even though I and my staff know what we think it should be. The Minister has discussed a Memorandum of Understanding between her office and the Museum. The understandings will undoubtedly be a mix of delegations and government imperatives, some political in nature.

This is also an unsettling time for the staff. Does all this change mean their jobs are in jeopardy? They will no longer be civil servants--wow, what does the mean? What of the philosophy of the museum? If we have to get private sector support, does this mean scientists will have to do research to satisfy some entrepreneur's whims? Will our exhibits have to tout some ad-man's view of the way the world should be? Will profit-motivated books take precedence over scientific books?

All these questions and a host of others crowd in on everyone. So here we stand--on the threshold of a new era in our museum's history. As Director, one of my major responsibilities is to keep a careful balance among the various functions of the museum, not allowing one to take precedence over another in an attempt, for instance, to satisfy an ephemeral political whim to place all the emphasis on public displays. I must take care to preserve the parts of our exhibit knowledge base and traditions that remain effective and valuable to our audience, while at the same time I must be attracted to and use the best of the modern approaches to entertainment. We are not going to be sucked into a glitzy and noisy circus.

There is absolutely no question that we must move into people's homes and reach out beyond our walls. We are neophytes in these fields, but are getting our feet wet. This year we started a cable television co-operative programme in conjunction with our 75th anniversary celebrations, an exhibit in the building. The show was called Living Sciences and featured interviews by the director of members of the staff who are engaged in interesting scientific or display activities. The cable company put together all of the filming and production effort including editing and a final cassette version for our internal use. We set up the interviews in the exhibit. So we were literally transporting the museum into the homes of people who were watching television.

This year the mass audience television special series called "The Last Frontier" began, a series in which I acted as technical consultant and which features the underwater world in an adventure/drama format. The concept is to engage the audience in an entertaining and exciting series, but sneak in a little science at the same time. The science is simple, but as accurate as we could make it within the framework of an adventure series. It is aired in prime time on a major network (CTV).

We began to think about the outside environment as a locale for displays with our woolly mammoths. These are in a natural setting that the animals would have encountered when they lived here. This provides a person with a real experience that would be something like, but considerably less dangerous than, the experience a palaeolithic hunter would have had when he attempted to hunt these arctic elephants. We have been stretching our concepts of what a museum should be like and seriously contemplating the addition of living creatures. Think how exciting and magical it would be to walk into a large aviary-like cage full of living butterflies. Certainly one of our most popular displays is on bees. Our view even includes the concept of an aquarium in the National Capital Region as part of what we should be encouraging.

In the not-so-distant or fanciful future, what about the concept of marrying the best of the zoos, museums and aquariums into something dramatically new--an Aquazoom. In the close future we are preparing to take over the other half of the VMMB after the Canadian Museum of Civilization (formerly the Museum of Man) leaves for its new quarters. We feel an exasperation with our masters. As yet we have no money allocated or even promised. What of our hopes and grand plans? The present government does not want to hear about more federal expenditures on the museums in the National Capital Region. At the same time, our Minister has stopped me from looking for private sector support for construction costs. The fire marshall threatens to close the building unless we make the necessary changes to make it safe for the public. It is a time of confusion and frustration, but we hope that time is short.

Looking beyond what we have already started as innovative programmes, I wonder about the possibility of using some of the very new or not yet invented technologies--what about an interactive computer wall to explain the principles of evolution or ecology as the visitor is surrounded by real objects, holographic projections and fractal images, all designed to fascinate and teach while entertaining. The future image capabilities of computers may allow us to reconstruct (in images) the past with a heretofore impossible realism. Modern laser sensors can "read" the three-dimensional objects in our collections and transfer that information to a computer driven cutting machine that can reproduce objects with remarkable realism. If the material used is of the same density as the original, there is no discernible difference between the real and the copy. Think what this would mean to a museum that displayed through the medium of travelling exhibits or through the loan of objects. There is the phenomenon of home videos. Perhaps we can enter the market of how-to videos or productions geared to the education field. Within the museum we are talking about the possibility of a computer-directed "explorers" club in which a member would carry around a handset searching for clues to the principles of predator-prey interaction

or the evolutionary tree of mankind. On gaining prowess, the explorer would graduate from junior to more senior levels, thus creating within the displays a reason for wanting to return and study them more carefully.

As we stand on the threshold of this new era, and look forward to the new Board, mandate, responsibilities, rules and opportunities, we know it will not be easy, we know there will be destructive forces and that some of our partners will be partisan and self-serving. But we also know that there are just as many positive forces, and people sympathetic to the needs of the museum, particularly if we can demonstrate a real intention to serve the country in a modern and exciting fashion, paying attention to our complete range of responsibilities to the present and the future. We are sure our vision of the future will be a winner.

---

1. W.H. Collins, The National Museum of Canada. Annual Report for 1926 (National Museum of Canada. Ottawa, Canada) 1927.

2. R.W. Brock, Summary Report of the Geological Survey of Canada for 1910. (Quoted in Collins, 1928, p. 46) Ottawa, Canada 1910.

3. Collins, op.cit.

4. Collins, op.cit.

5. Collins, op.cit.

6. Alcock to Hume, Official Memorandum 28 June 1950. (On file at National Museum of Natural Sciences)

7. Hume to Alcock, Official Memorandum 11 August 1950. (On file at National Museum of Natural Sciences)

8. Anonymous. Document 3 - Working Arrangements for Fossil Collection (Discussion paper 1965) 1 page.

9. L. Lemieux, Official Memorandum December 10, 1970 (On file at National Museum of Natural Sciences).

10. C. Moyd, Official Memorandum September 21, 1971 (On file at National Museum of Natural Sciences) 10 pages.

11. From Formalin to Fortran, 1971

12. Science Council recommendations

Section Three:

CASE STUDIES

LE MANDAT NATIONAL DES SERVICES ÉDUCATIFS DU MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DU CANADA: 1988-1998

Michel V. Cheff
Services éducatifs, Musée des beaux-arts du Canada

Les écrits que l'on propose à des lecteurs éventuels et que l'on insère dans un recueil où points de vue, idéologies et attitudes sont multiples, comme c'est le cas ici, ouvrent la porte toute grande à l'analyse de réalités philosophiques et pratiques et mènent à la synthèse des possibilités qui s'en dégagent. Ces mêmes articles offrent à leur auteur l'occasion d'émettre des opinions personnelles et de faire le point sur ses expériences, et celle de faire preuve d'ingéniosité, de créativité et d'imagination en énonçant des perspectives d'avenir. Les réalités futures ne sont-elles pas fondées sur les idées et les défis actuels, aussi grandioses soient-ils?

Une vision, se veut d'abord personnelle; elle se doit d'être tributaire d'une longue expérience, d'une conviction profonde et lucide; elle est ensuite articulée et affinée selon des réalités et des contextes internes et externes bien spécifiques. Partagée et endossée par d'autres, cette même vision est finalement présentée dans sa forme revue et corrigée. Les idées sont toujours émises et communiquées par l'être humain; leur réalisation est toujours question de volonté et de communicabilité. Le temps est là, il est à cet instant même, en 1988, devant nous. En 1995, il nous sera opportun de relire ce texte et d'en évaluer le contenu, d'en vérifier les réalisations et d'en assumer les modifications, dans le cadre de notre itinéraire vers le XXI^{e} siècle.

UNE MISSION EDUCATIVE

Les Services éducatifs du Musée des beaux-arts du Canada (MbaC) détiennent un rôle fondamental de communication, autant au coeur du Musée qu'auprès du public canadien.

Sur un plan physique et réel, les Services éducatifs servent de lien direct et visible entre les oeuvres d'art des collections permanentes, celles qui constituent les expositions temporaires et les diverses catégories de visiteurs au Musée . Par extension, les Services éducatifs ont la mission de faire connaître les collections du MbaC à la communauté nationale. C'est d'un encouragement à mieux connaître et à apprécier les oeuvres d'art et le patrimoine culturel qu'offre le MbaC, dont parlent les Services éducatifs, autant dans la région de la capitale nationale que dans l'ensemble du pays.

Au sein des Programmes publics du MbaC, les Services éducatifs ont le mandat de communiquer et de diffuser, dans les deux langues officielles du pays et selon des fondements pédagogiques et andragogiques[1], les programmes et activités du MbaC. C'est par le biais de situations d'apprentissage variées que les Services éducatifs amènent le public à réagir à l'oeuvre d'art, tant au plan perceptuel qu'intellectuel, à en assumer la connaissance et à développer des compétences visuelles et critiques, personnelles.

Le mandat est important, il est aussi d'envergure et ne sera, sans doute, jamais complètement réalisable. Il est renouvelé selon le principe démographique perpétuel des générations et du changement social, tout en étant, au plan culturel et éducatif, en perpétuel mouvement.

DES OBJECTIFS CULTURELS

Mission et mandat exigent la formulation d'objectifs selon lesquels les intervenants des Services éducatifs peuvent agir.

Ces objectifs généraux sont idéologiques, servent de moteur au processus éducatif et s'adressent non pas seulement aux Canadiens à travers le pays, mais à tous ceux qui s'intéressent à l'art visuel. Ils se lisent comme suit:

1- Établir et assurer une meilleure place aux oeuvres d'art visuel comme produits de culture dans la vie de la communauté canadienne.

2- Progresser sur le chemin du savoir et de la communication visuels et transmettre cette culture aux générations futures de Canadiens.

3- Améliorer la qualité de la vie au coeur même de notre société contemporaine.

Le mot Éducation, dans son sens large, évoque inévitablement le mot Culture. Si l'on adhère à la définition que nous donne Alain Finkielkraut du mot culture comme étant "une personnalité collective originale[2]", on est face à une réalité omniprésente difficile à élaguer. Tout se veut culturel si on peut en dégager des caractéristiques de personnalité, de collectivité et d'originalité. L'éducation, autant au plan pédagogique qu'andragogique, celle qui s'intéresse aux enfants et celle qui intéresse les adultes, est un instrument de décodage sociétal privilégié. En art et au Musée, ce décodage s'opère grâce à la spécificité même du produit qu'est l'oeuvre d'art et à celle du lieu dans lequel il est exposé, les galeries du Musée.

Le musée d'art se distingue de la cohorte des musées scientifiques historiques ou ethnographiques que l'on peut

fréquenter à travers le Canada, en ce qu'il réunit et présente des oeuvres originales créées par l'esprit artistique de l'homme. L'unicité de l'oeuvre d'art nous permet d'établir des champs d'apprentissage encore trop souvent méconnus où le langage de communication est dérivé du visuel et du perceptuel pour aboutir au cognitif et à l'intellectuel. Voilà un trajet qui peut paraître abscons lorsqu'évalué sur un plan technique comme le fait souvent un public épris d'informatique; c'est pourtant là le cheminement fondamental de la sauvegarde de valeurs et de concepts tels l'émotion, la surprise et la découverte phénoménologique.

Bref, le lieu de l'art dans le cas présent, le Musée, doit être perçu comme un oasis au coeur d'une société en gestation perpétuelle, et l'éducation au musée d'art doit être perçue comme un moyen d'en apprivoiser le contenu artistique.

UNE PROGRAMMATION ÉDUCATIVE AU COEUR DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Le public canadien qui a l'occasion de venir au MbaC, ces Canadiens qui, avec les visiteurs venant de partout dans le monde, dès le 21 mai 1988, auront vu et apprécié les collections nationales présentées dans le nouveau MbaC s'entendront à dire et redire comment le plaisir de l'art au MbaC en est un qui est accessible de par sa visibilité, sa viabilité et sa spécificité.

Les Services éducatifs, de concert entre autres avec les secteurs de la recherche, de la conservation et de graphisme, se seront joints aux Services d'information et d'orientation du public afin d'accueillir les Canadiens à Ottawa. Une gamme complète de Services éducatifs ont été mis sur pied à cet effet. Nous nous arrêtons à quelques services à titre d'exemple.

Un programme de publications éducatives intégré aux collections d'art canadien, d'art européen, américain et asiatique, d'art ancien et contemporain permettra aux visiteurs au cours des mois et des années de prendre le temps de contempler l'oeuvre d'art, de lire à son sujet, de se familiariser avec des problématiques contextuelles aux oeuvres et de prendre le temps aussi bien de réfléchir à l'oeuvre d'art ou à l'environnement muséal que d'en discuter.

Les Services éducatifs n'en restent pas aux imprimés, ils engagent aussi le public dans l'exploration du visuel par le truchement d'activités et d'outils éducatifs répondant aux besoins de divers auditoires. Par exemple, on retrouvera quatre salles thématiques, articulées autour de points stratégiques de l'histoire de l'art au Canada et situées aux quatre coins de l'étage d'art canadien. Cette initiative se veut une collaboration entre éducateurs et conservateurs, collaboration qui a pour but

d'interpréter la collection permanente, non pas en parlant strictement des oeuvres d'art, mais en les situant dans un contexte artistique, social, économique, politique ou autre. Ces salles thématiques permettent au visiteur de mieux voir et comprendre les oeuvres de la collection permanente du Musée présentées dans les galeries d'art canadien.

On offre aussi au public des visites guidées conçues sur mesure, selon l'âge, l'arrière-plan socio-culturel, les intérêts et souvent même le temps disponible. Puisque le culturel est significatif d'une collectivité, chaque culture, chaque civilisation, chaque époque a son langage artistique. Les similarités et les différences constituent et définissent la culture; les Canadiens qui, au Musée, vont au-delà de l'apparence et cherchent à connaître l'oeuvre d'art, sont garants du langage particulier de l'art et sauront mieux s'identifier par rapport à la culture artistico-visuelle qui les entoure.

Si le mandat national des Services éducatifs du MbaC prend source au Musée même, là où se trouvent les 40 000 oeuvres d'art de la collection nationale, il est bien entendu que ce mandat doit être diffusé au plus grand nombre de communautés culturelles selon une géographie pan-canadienne.

UNE DIFFUSION PAN-CANADIENNE

La problématique de la diffusion d'un mandat éducatif à l'échelle nationale en est une de communication, d'organisation et de conviction; elle est déterminée non seulement par les réseaux bureaucratiques des ressources humaines, financières ou autres, mais aussi par l'immensité géographique même et le pluralisme démographique du pays.

Des projets, activités, publications, communications, rencontres et quoi encore ont déjà précédé le présent discours; ils ont tous eu, chacun de façon ponctuelle et différente, une influence et un effet importants. Que ce soit un dépliant explicatif d'une exposition itinérante, une affiche éducative, un manuel des docents, que ce soit le Répertoire national des Services éducatifs de galeries et de musées d'art ou encore des communications lors de congrès en éducation de l'art, ce ne sont là que des bribes, loin d'être suffisantes à l'élaboration de directives et de politiques pour un mandat national. Car ce qui n'a pas encore été possible, c'est l'établissement d'une solide tradition de Services éducatifs originant du MbaC et répondant aux besoins du Canada tout entier.

1988-1998 : DES STRATÉGIES ÉDUCATIVES POUR L'AVENIR

Explorons les méandres du possible, du virtuel et du potentiel.

Ayant d'ores et déjà établis de solides assises en programmation éducatives sur les banques de données que fournissent l'expérience des publics, les contacts professionnels à travers le Canada, la connaissance des méthodes et moyens d'apprentissage à notre disposition que fournit aussi la consultation au coeur et à l'extérieur du MbaC, et ayant reconnu le nouvel esprit de leadership du MbaC tel qu'insufflé par M^me^ Shirley Thomson, sa directrice, je me représente la prochaine décennie comme une période engrossée de changements et prometteuse de réalisations.

N'est-il pas aussi opportun de garantir, au public canadien, l'établissement d'une tradition de Services éducatifs diffusés au plan national?

L'élaboration de mon propos m'amène maintenant à un stade où la présentation d'activités éducatives pour fins de diffusion nationale, se veut concrète et descriptive, bien qu'idéaliste, voire utopique. Tout, enfin presque tout, reste à faire. J'ai pour cela, confiance à l'opinion publique et à ceux qui ont le pouvoir d'agir: aux décideurs idéologiques et politiques, aux muséologues, ainsi qu'aux intervenants du monde de l'éducation et du monde de l'art et, bien sûr, aux éducateurs et au personnel du MbaC. C'est grâce à eux que de nouvelles stratégies éducatives pourront exister.

DES ÉDUCATEURS PROFESSIONNELS

La clé première du rayonnement en éducation de l'art au Musée à travers le Canada se trouve dans la mise sur pied et le maintien efficace d'un réseau de communications entre professionnels. Les Éducateurs de musées\galeries d'art du Canada E.G.A./M.C. ont, depuis quelques années, réussi à établir une sérieuse coopération culturelle en matière d'éducation artistique au musée d'art et dans les régions et communautés presque partout au Canada. Les éducateurs du MbaC participent activement à l'ensemble des activités du groupe et sont garants de l'esprit collégial qu'on y trouve. Entre 1988 et 1998, le dialogue et l'exemple des E.G.A./M.C. nous permettront de réduire, un tant soit peu, les écarts géographiques, régionaux et culturels qui nous séparent d'un musée à l'autre et qui nous séparent souvent du public canadien.

Les professionnels de l'éducation au musée d'art se doivent de partager leurs savoirs, leurs expériences et leurs rêves. Une

rencontre des E.G.A.\M.C., d'une durée de trois jours, est organisée annuellement et précède le congrès annuel de la Société canadienne d'éducation par l'art. En 1988, c'est à Calgary que cette rencontre a lieu; en 1989, c'est Ottawa qui sera l'hôte du groupe. Les Services éducatifs du MbaC sont déjà engagés dans les travaux du groupe; c'est avec énergie qu'ils le demeureront et qu'ils continueront à faire preuve de leadership au sein du groupe.

Il en va de même en ce qui concerne le Comité permanent du groupe d'interêt spécialisé en éducation, de l'Association des musées canadiens, puisque là aussi les échanges sont fructueux et que là aussi la participation du MbaC et appelée à se développer.

Ces contacts et échanges professionnels sont essentiels à la diffusion de la recherche effectuée au MbaC ou ailleurs au Canada et à celle de l'expérience qui est acquise en matière d'éducation artistique au Musée; ils sont aussi essentiels à l'acquisition de nouvelles connaissances et à l'apprentissage de nouvelles méthodologies en sciences humaines telles que pratiquées à la grandeur du pays.

EXPOSITIONS THÉMATIQUES ITINÉRANTES

Quant à la diffusion des oeuvres de la collection nationale, il faut dire que traditionnellement, les Services éducatifs n'y participent que sur le plan de l'interprétation des oeuvres d'art, sous forme de publication éducative. Rien, sinon des raisons de logistique, ne nous empêche de songer au jour où les Services éducatifs du MbaC offriront à l'ensemble de la communauté canadienne un programme d'expositions thématiques itinérantes à caractère pédagogique et (ou) andragogique. Des expositions éducative sur les collections d'art canadien et d'art contemporain seraient certes celles qui épouseraient le mieux l'identité politique et culturelle des Canadiens tout en adhérant à deux mandats importants des collections du MbaC. Sans tomber dans un didactisme trop lourd, il est plausible que nous puissions répondre à la demande du public pour des expositions thématiques où le pouvoir de séduction souvent fournit par le thème, met le public en contact direct avec des oeuvres d'art originales. N'est-ce pas là notre but premier à nous tous qui travaillons au musée d'art?

DES LIVRES

Le monde des publications ouvre grandes ses portes; il est plus que temps d'en franchir le seuil. La littérature en éducation et en appréciation de l'art est encore bien jeune, les ouvrages publiés jusqu'à aujourd'hui sont rares. Le mot est lancé et les Services éducatifs le saisissent au vol. La liste des possibilités est longue : des livres sur les coulisses du MbaC, des livres

d'activités en lecture de l'image, une histoire de l'art canadien, simplifiée et adaptée aux jeunes, des livres pour les familles, pour les aînés et quoi d'autre encore.

1988 aura donné naissance au petit livre Voici Edgar Degas, livre pour enfants écrits par Anne Newlands, éducatrice. 1989 et les années subséquentes verront la publication d'autres titres traitant de thématiques en art canadien et en art contemporain ou des grandes expositions du Musée.

REPRODUCTION D'OEUVRES D'ART ET VOCABULAIRE VISUEL

Certes, faute de mieux, c'est à la reproduction que nous devons nous reporter. Dès notre tendre enfance, les images que nous reconnaissons et celles avec lesquelles nous vivons quotidiennement sont celles qui restent gravées dans notre mémoire. Les images, si elles sont reproduites d'oeuvres d'art originales, nous les retrouverons peut-être un jour, lors d'une visite au Musée, celui du Louvre, du Prado ou encore celui de Montréal ou d'Ottawa, et ce sera une découverte, peut-être même une révélation que de voir la peinture ou la sculpture connue et aimée en reproduction, dans sa réalité originale.

Les Services éducatifs du MbaC désirent mettre sur pied un programme de reproductions d'oeuvres d'art de la collection nationale accompagnées de matériel pédagogique pour fins de distribution dans toutes les écoles du pays. Quel excellent moyen d'infiltrer le milieu scolaire, d'influencer l'apprentissage artistique des étudiants, de redorer le blason de l'art canadien et celui de l'art contemporain et de, par le fait même, modifier les habitudes et les attitudes visuelles des générations montantes! Un nouveau vocabulaire visuel, une nouvelle iconographie, un nouveau répertoire d'images de l'art fourniront aux jeunes des repères visuels et socio-culturels qu'ils pourront identifier aux réalités de la société contemporaine. Car enfin, les critères de qualité, de créativité et d'originalité, si chers aux artistes et aux intervenants du milieu de l'art, ne feront jamais partie du vocabulaire du public scolaire si on ne lui en fournit pas les exemplaires.

La culture populaire ou ethnologique dans le sens où l'entend Bruno Lussato[3] aura rapidement pris le dessus et règnera en maîtresse de la déculturation, non pas parce que les jeunes ne s'intéressent pas à d'autres niveaux de culture, mais parce que l'on ne leur aura pas fourni les outils nécessaires pour connaître les différences entre ces mêmes niveaux de culture.

Imaginons pour un instant un étudiant qui, venu au MbaC d'une région éloignée de l'Ontario, de l'Alberta ou d'ailleurs au Canada, ne cherche pas qu'à voir le fameux Pin solitaire de Tom Thomson,

mais aussi les derniers dessins de la montréalaise Betty Goodwin. Quel écart. Quelle ouverture d'esprit!

DE LA FORMATION DES MAÎTRES EN L'AN 2000

Des manuels et des vidéos pédagogiques traitant de l'appréciation artistique, mettant en valeur la collection nationale et centrés sur la lecture de l'image joueraient un rôle de catalyseurs auprès des enseignants dans nos écoles élémentaires et secondaires partout au Canada. La formation des maîtres inclut rarement le Musée dans ses activités d'apprentissage. Pourtant, le Musée est partie intégrante de nos réalités urbaine et communautaire. Si les institutions d'enseignement qui forment les maîtres ne font pas ce travail, les éducateurs de musée d'art se doivent de se concerter et de développer des stratégies afin de palier à cette lacune. Lorsque l'enseignant sera sensibilisé au musée par le biais de littérature et de documentation électronique sur le sujet ou par le contact direct avec les éducateurs au musée d'art, il saura réagir à l'oeuvre d'art et saura mieux communiquer l'intention de l'artiste. Il lui sera alors plus naturel d'amener ses élèves au Musée, selon ses possibilités à lui, là où il se trouve au Canada.

Les enseignants sont les vrais décideurs lorsqu'il s'agit d'intégrer les ressources culturelles au curriculum scolaire. Fournissons-leur des instruments de travail qui leur permettront de prendre une décision favorable au développement de l'enfant par un contact suivi avec l'art visuel.

VIDÉOGRAPHES SUR LES ARTISTES CONTEMPORAINS

Les médias électroniques ont aussi leur place dans un programme de publications éducatives pour une communauté pan-canadienne. Des échos se font entendre de tous les côtés, nous arrivent au MbaC, du nord, de l'est, de l'ouest et d'ailleurs au Canada; ce que l'on nous demande ce sont des documents vidéographiques sur les artistes canadiens qui travaillent actuellement et qui déterminent le cours de l'histoire de l'art. Entre autres, le directeur du département des arts d'expérimentation du Ontario College of Art, à Toronto, écrit au MbaC: "I would strongly recommend that the National Gallery adopt a comprehensive film/video policy whereby it documents the work and lives of as many artists working in Canada as possible[4]" et cela afin de mieux servir l'art canadien et de mieux informer le public canadien.

Cette documentation en art contemporain viendrait, au cours des années, constituer une vidéothèque de documentaires éducatifs sur les artistes. La réalisation du projet serait fondée sur la

participation d'artistes représentés dans la collection d'art contemporain du MbaC et prendrait la forme, soit de l'entrevue avec un artiste, de la visite à l'atelier d'un artiste pour y comprendre sa démarche créatrice, soit du tournage de l'évolution d'une oeuvre ou d'une installation ou prendrait la forme de rencontres entre quelques artistes d'une même région, de même tendance ou simplement d'intérêts divergents.

Voilà un moyen d'engager le public canadien dans le processus de l'art actuel. La télévision éducative comme la télévision publique devra participer à la diffusion de ces documents vidéo afin de rejoindre un grand nombre de Canadiens. D'autres réseaux de distribution devront être mis sur pied, peut être par l'entremise de l'Association des musées canadiens ou encore par le biais du système des galeries et des centres d'artistes expérimentaux.

DES STAGES EN MUSÉOLOGIE

L'histoire de l'art, la critique d'art, l'éducation de l'art, la gestion des arts et la muséologie en général sont devenus sujets courants dans nos collèges et universités. D'ici la fin du XX^{e} siècle, il sera foncièrement impossible au MbaC de ne pas ouvrir ses portes pour offrir les services de son personnel d'experts en mettant sur pied et en coordonnant un programme de stages de formation des ressources humaines qui assureront, dès le début du XX^{e} siècle, la relève muséologique à travers le pays. L'importance des collections, l'ampleur de l'institution et l'expérience des membres de son personnel font du MbaC le chef de file rêvé en matière de stages de formation. Une étude effectuée au plan local, et ayant pouvoir d'application nationale auprès du public collégial et universitaire, a souligné ce besoin. Les Services éducatifs ont maintenant parmi leur rang un éducateur qui assure la liaison avec le public collégial et universitaire. Même s'il ne s'agit pas toujours de stages, les professeurs et les étudiants de partout au Canada peuvent entrer en contact avec nous et nous faire part de leurs besoins spécifiques en ce qui concerne les collections et les ressources du MbaC. Nous chercherons à répondre à ces divers besoins et à concevoir une programmation adaptée au public collégial et universitaire.

DES CONFÉRENCES, ATELIERS, SYMPOSIA

Le public canadien invite souvent les spécialistes du MbaC à venir chez eux. La directrice du Musée, les conservateurs des collections, les restaurateurs, les éducateurs et d'autres membres du personnel vont, lorsque cela est possible, à travers le Canada prononcer des conférences, mener des ateliers de discussion ou de

formation et présider à des colloques. Une organisation et une coordination structurées et bien rôdées pourraient permettre aux Services éducatifs de mettre sur pied et d'opérer un programme de conférenciers recrutés au MbaC et venant aussi d'ailleurs au pays, soit des muséologues d'autres institutions canadiennes ou des professeurs spécialistes de l'art, soit encore des critiques d'art, mais surtout des artistes. C'est un moyen efficace d'établir des contacts réels entre les intervenants du monde de l'art et le public canadien. Partout au Canada, la population serait témoin d'un échange des plus dynamiques d'idées, d'expériences et de compétences.

DES FAMILLES "FIN-DE-SIECLE"

Que dire aussi de la famille canadienne, éclatée si l'on veut, puisque pluraliste et parfois interchangeable, mais encore certes perçue comme véhiculant les valeurs fondamentales de la vie et de l'avenir de notre société contemporaine. La famille se prolonge souvent des membres qui la composent aux amis et aux intervenants qui s'y rattachent directement. La famille est alors comprise dans sa globalité et sa quotidienneté; sa définition repose sur les réseaux de communication qu'on y trouve.

Les Services éducatifs du MbaC ont développé, de 1982 à 1987, une programmation modèle, basée sur la communication et la réflexion sur l'art et axée sur les rapports familiaux dans le milieu muséal. Ce programme connu sous le titre Famille et amis a fait l'objet d'une évaluation sérieuse et s'est avéré un grand succès. D'autres musées à travers le Canada ont emprunté ce modèle, l'ont adapté afin de répondre aux besoins de leur communauté.

Dès l'automne 1988, ce programme fournira à nouveau une source inépuisable de situations d'apprentissage connues et nouvelles et permettra aux éducateurs du MbaC d'aller un peu plus loin dans leur recherche et leur connaissance du public familial. Ils partageront les résultats avec leurs collègues ici au Canada et à l'étranger. L'influence sur le plan éducatif d'un tel projet réside non seulement dans sa réalisation mais surtout dans son effet d'entraînement. C'est, par analogie, une boule de neige qui se forme d'un océan à l'autre.

LE MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DU CANADA, L'ÉDUCATION ET L'UNESCO : 1988-1997

En conclusion, revoyons ce qui est proposé ci-haut comme une politique éducative pan-canadienne qui inaugure les dix années à venir et s'inscrit dans le cadre des objectifs de développement culturel tels que présentés par l'Unesco dans un article intitulé: Un grand départ : 1988 La Décennie mondiale du développement

culturel[5]. Cet article nous met en garde contre le nivellement factice de la culture, dans notre cas, culture muséologique, souvent effectuée par les médias et la technologie. Rappelons-nous les racines purement artistique de notre Musée et réaffirmont notre spécificité en matière de culture visuelle et esthétique.

Sans chercher à adhérer à la lettre aux grands objectifs de l'Unesco pour la Décennie mondiale du développement culturel, cherchons-en l'esprit via les collections du MbaC en tenant compte de la réalité canadienne. Nous serons désireux de présenter nos collections au public canadien, de les diffuser, d'en communiquer le sens, d'en partager le plaisir. L'article de l'Unesco nous donne l'occasion d'agir et de répond à la
question : "Que peut-on faire? On peut entreprendre des projets visant à libérer la créativité des individus et des groupes. Des actions pourraient être lancées en vue de favoriser l'expression individuelle et collective dans le domaine spécifiquement culturel ou dans le champ élargi de l'éducation, des médias, de l'environnement, du cadre de vie et de travail[6]." Notre intention est claire, elle a l'heur d'être définie en matière de culture, d'éducation, d'environnement et de qualité de la vie. Il ne reste qu'à agir.

---

1. Andragogie : éducation des adultes "andra" vient du mot grec qui signifie adulte.

2. Alain Finkielkraut, "La défaite de Goethe", dans Le passé et son avenir, Gallimard, Paris, 1985, p. 23.

3. Bruno Lussato, Bouillon de culture, Laffont, Paris, 1986, chapitre 1.

4. Lettre datée du 5 janvier 1988 de Jim Tiley, Chair, Departement of Experimental Arts, Ontario Arts College à Elizabeth Kidd, consultante au département des Expositions du MbaC.

5. Bulletin de la Commission canadienne de l'Unesco, n° 7, juin 1987, p. 1-5.

6. Ibid., p.3.

INTERPRETATION:
NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION

Lorna Kee
Chief, Education and Cultural Affairs
Canadian Museum of Civilization

In 1989, the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) opens its newly constructed public and curatorial facilities to the public. The design of a national museum in what has been called the "yeasty" years preceding the new millennium reinforced the importance of the CMC's role in the preservation and interpretation of the country's cultural legacy. Further, a challenge was set--to define what part the CMC could play in determining future change.

The public programmes department was tasked with planning and delivering a range of new interpretive programmes and visitor services to complement and supplement the exhibitions. Over the past several years interpretation within the CMC had moved from one focused on the dissemination of information derived from the institution's collections and research findings to a function that could be more properly defined as mediation or brokering between objects or experiences and the user. Strongly influenced by the nature of the museum's research disciplines--history and anthropology, the approach to subject matter was often cross-cultural, focusing on the processes of change and seeking context, patterns and interrelationships. Further, the interpretation approach promoted inquiry; objects were not the focus, but rather one of the tools of such inquiry. Rescue archaeology, urgent ethnology and social history programmes underscored the importance of engaging communities in the research and preservation of their daily heritage. In a museum that had recently defined the promotion of intercultural understanding as a core mission, emphasis was placed on approaches that would facilitate a "dialogue" between the objects or experiences, the origins and cultural values they embody and the visitor or user who brings his or her own background, skills and values. In short, the interpretative approach sought to link people and their heritage through the tools of museology, objects, information and the museum environment itself. What direction then should new interpretative programmes take in modifying or building on this approach? What trends affecting the needs and expectations of the museum's publics should be central to this planning?

The most obvious trend was the changing demographic profile of Canadian society: an aging population; rising per capita incomes and living standards with an ever-widening and disturbing

gap between the "haves" and "have-nots"; improving educational levels accompanied by an increasing demand for both formal and informal adult education and countered by growing evidence of widespread illiteracy; reduction in family size and changes in structure; an increase in the number of single people; the escalation of leisure time and recreational travel; a rising consumer demand for specialized and individualized service. Audience surveys defined the profile of museum visitors more precisely. Additional tools, however, were sought to translate this data into specific programme design.

The work by Robert Kelly of the University of British Columbia was useful in this regard. Engaged by the museum to develop a master plan for serving just one of those publics, the tourist, Kelly's analysis both enabled the staff to understand a fundamental shift occurring in the needs of the museum visitor and demonstrated an approach to market analysis that proved useful in programme design. He, like others, distinguishes the social, sacred and intellectual needs of potential museum users, emphasizing the importance of understanding and responding equally to all three. His plan described in some detail a traditional and a "new" museum visitor. Kelly anticipated that in the first five years of the museum's operation, it would continue to attract the majority of its visitors from among the traditional museum users. The general demographic characteristics of this audience have not varied in the last twenty years. They are relatively well educated, earn above average incomes and hold highly regarded occupations. They can be characterized as culture consumers, seeking out and enjoying a range of cultural activities. Socialized from childhood to love museums, they regard the visit as a form of meaningful leisure activity. The needs of the traditional visitor centre on the museum's collections. And familiar with the curators' code, as Kelly describes the typically anthropological or aesthetic language used to place the object in context, the traditional visitor is comfortable with current exhibitions and programming practices. They generally do not judge the overall quality of the museum visit on the basis of such visitor services as restaurants. They are more likely to be attracted by the promotion of special objects than special activities and they make independent judgements on quality, authenticity and taste when making sale shop purchases.

Kelly contrasted this traditional visitor to a new kind of visitor. Technologically trained, these visitors have been assigned enhanced status by a society that values technological expertise. While as highly educated as the traditional visitor, and as capable of processing information efficiently, they regard museum visiting more as a symbolic expression of their acquired position in society than an activity which is inherently interesting in its own right. Not introduced to museum visiting as part of growing up or trained in the humanities, they are not familiar with the curators' code and can lose interest quickly,

frequently visiting museums for a shorter period of time. Unlike the traditional visitor they are likely to visit a museum at a tourist destination only once because that single visit provides full symbolic value. Communicating by word of mouth about the visit to their friends and colleagues, their "significant others," is a necessary aspect of validating its symbolic significance and they seek tangible evidence of the visit and experience through photographs, souvenirs and objects that are clearly associated with the museum. They are heavy consumers of visitor services--restaurants, lounges, cinemas--seeing them as important aspects of the overall experience and they rely on the museum's authority to provide assurance of authenticity and taste in their sales shop purchases. As Kelly summarizes, "... cultural institutions and activities, while continuing to attract patrons, volunteers and visitors who quite simply enjoy <u>being there,</u> now also attract a second segment of patrons, volunteers and visitors who are more concerned with attaining a state of <u>having been there.</u>"[1]

Kelly backed this broad assessment with more specific profiles of visitors--leisure, business, personal, retired and family; visitors on city sprees; the Canadiana visitor; tour and school groups and so on. His work proved valuable in two ways. The nature of his audience profiles and their application to the full range of public programmes proved more useful in programme design than previous marketing analyses and methodology drawn more directly from the business sector. They helped to frame considerations of the strategies required to balance sometimes conflicting demands of target audiences as well as driving the more prosaic decisions of hours of operation and fee structure, location and quality of ancillary visitor services, advertising strategies and so on. His approach did not reduce the heat frequently generated by the so-called culture clash in museums of the mission-driven/market-driven modes of programme planning, but it assisted in forging an accommodation, if not an integration, of the two into the final design. More importantly, however, Kelly's analysis reinforced the importance of the body of research surrounding the consumption of culture and symbolic behaviour and the work done by himself, Dean MacCannell, Nelson Graburn and others. The notion that a new societal role for museums as status symbol is emerging in the post-industrial social systems prompts a re-examination of our traditional assumptions of visitor needs and behaviour. The existing models of informal eduction or business derived marketing have not proven entirely useful in framing a theory and methodology for serving the general "casual" visitor. It is possible, as Kelly's research would indicate, a more fruitful source may exist in the applicable areas of anthropology, sociology, consumer research and environmental psychology.

The rapid growth of interest in heritage, cultural expression and identity became a second important trend for the museum to understand and incorporate into its planning. A discussion paper

introducing Ontario's heritage policy review proved useful in analyzing this growth. Occurring widely on both a collective and individual level, it is perhaps reflected best by the now 2,000 heritage institutions in Canada that are visited well over 90 million times per year and the growth of "grass-root" heritage activities. Governments have historically understood the importance of cultural identity in mobilizing and sustaining a sense of community, particularly in times of societal stress--as the war and debates on free trade demonstrate. Heritage, however, had remained largely on the periphery of most political agendas, with cultural and other socio-economic policies rarely linked. There is, the discussion paper argues, a growing recognition of the importance of heritage as an active element of daily life, its potential in the socio-economic development of communities and of course its value in grounding and guiding social transformation and change. One could speculate that the growth of cultural tourism, studies of the economic multiplier effects of heritage activity and more effective lobbying by heritage associations are prompting this very gradual shift in the political awareness. Individuals are also expressing a growing need for a sense of stability, roots and a feeling of territory, in part, it is thought, to counter the homogenizing effect of the mass media and the dislocation created by a society that is socially, economically and physically mobile. Evidence of this growth in interest resides in an increasing level of involvement in heritage preservation among individuals and organizations at every level of society. Museums, libraries, archives, historical organizations--the traditional custodians of heritage--are being joined by individuals and groups in education systems, cultural and recreational tourism, ethnic associations, land use planners, craft co-operatives and municipal councils--in a decentralized but increasingly collegial network. There appears to be a growing demand for the sharing of responsibility for heritage preservation and interpretation and for increased involvement by the public in the decision-making of heritage agencies. As the discussion paper concludes, together this points to a reawakening of the ancient idea of stewardship, of a community-wide responsibility for the continuity of life and civilization.

Understanding the implications of this growth in heritage interest and supporting that growth suggested opportunities for new kinds of public programmes. First and perhaps most importantly, it offered the museum the potential of developing a new relationship with its publics. In the past, the museum, in working on <u>behalf</u> of the public, had cast it as visitor, learner and, more recently, consumer, and clearly these roles would remain valid. The extension of the informal heritage network, however, provided an additional incentive to work <u>with</u> its publics--as colleagues engaged jointly in the action of heritage preservation and interpretation. The eco-museum or territory museum formed in part a useful model for consideration. In his analysis, René

Rivard has identified a number of characteristics of these museums in the Canadian environment. Briefly, within an eco-museum concept, citizens take an active role in identifying and developing the heritage of their territory; using museum concepts and techniques, they become the managers, curators, animators and consumers. The "collection" is the collective memory; the museum, the territory. The museum organization, which often comes to combine a documentation and oral history centre and display facility, operates as a technical support, providing training and other resources for use by the community. It is an instrument for the community's heritage activity; a workshop and educational process. Lay and professional researchers work collaboratively against research goals set by the community. The eco-museums activities are linked strongly to the present and future socio-economic development of the region. Clearly, given its mandate, structure and size of territory, the CMC could not emulate the full eco-museum model. Elements of programmes that would be useful in working more closely with the heritage initiatives of individuals, groups or communities suggested themselves, however: provision of training in applied museology; access to technical assistance and resources; development of programmes that offer research projects of various lengths from short- to long-term, of differing types--basic, applied and summative, and where appropriate, utilizing a cross-disciplinary approach; integration of the material drawn from the collective memory with scientific interpretation--the personalization of history; collaborative development that joins the scientific and practical practitioners; the opportunity to focus and frame social issues, moving from the array of small facts and narrative to the Big Explanation; communication and validation to the group and others through display, performance, publication; and perhaps most importantly, support of the management and maintenance of the process by the community, group or individual. Such programmes, which could combine the museum's expertise, facilities and resources with the knowledge, aspirations and skills of interested groups, would build naturally on the museum's tradition of research, particularly its extensive and ongoing work in the field. They would add the elements of collaboration and public interpretation.

The existence of a much expanded network also created the opportunity and indeed obligation to develop new partnerships for programme evolution and delivery, extending ongoing relationships with other museums, embassies, theatre groups, the National Capital Commission, the educational system and so on. Programmes benefit from expanded resources, often new audiences and heightened profiles, and perhaps most importantly the innovation generated by cross-fertilization. Like all other agencies that are beginning to work more actively in networks, such partnerships demanded the development of structures, policies and skills required to mobilize frequently differing resources, methods, values and expertise, to resolve competing views and to avoid the co-opting of the museum's

mission. The role the museum would now be called upon to play was varied--leader, catalyst, animator, co-ordinator, funding source, technician. Whatever the role, it became clear that collaboration would increasingly become a strategy of programme development.

Finally, the promotion of the importance of heritage as a tool in contemporary societal development and change demanded that it be made usable, its impact more tangible; in short, the rhetoric translated into action. Providing a historical perspective linked to the analysis and ultimately resolution of current societal issues grew in importance in programme planning, as did the need to resolve the museum's own role as forum or advocate with its mandate, governance and the impact of increased use of corporate sponsorship for programmes. With this trend, too, the end product of interpretation became not as much the information and insights gained in the museum, but the activity it could generate in the community. Such interpretative programmes would highlight community-based resources; point to actions that visitors can take; support and promote community heritage initiatives; and would be frequently offered off-site and in forms adapted to the particular needs and interests of groups. There was also growing interest in the public programming area in the potential relationship between the museum and social service needs. Support of community initiatives to combat illiteracy; the use of oral history as a tool to serve both psychological and social needs of the elderly; use of museum resources for disabled; and the provision of a nurturing and mentoring environment for at-risk youngsters in the children's museum were examples of initiatives that could be explored, seeking that delicate balance between the museum's mandate, resources and expertise and the needs of the community, both local and national, that it serves. In a somewhat similar vein, the museum also considered more extensively the potential for contributing to the economic development of its communities. Beyond the obvious effect of generating tourist income and employment, the museum could play a useful role, as eco-museums have demonstrated, in encouraging the research and revitalization of skills, crafts and art forms in communities through the very kind of programmes it designed and supported. In short, the growing interest in heritage in Canada reinforced the importance of the museum seeking ways to link more effectively with both its local and national community and to make both its resources and that of heritage a useful social tool. It would become a place of living cultures, embedded in their historical roots rather than one of past cultures, tenuously linked if at all to the present.

If eco-museums formed one interesting model for programme design, the mega-theme park was quite another. George MacDonald has written extensively about the importance of these theme parks as a new kind of cultural broker. He has analyzed their formula as the provision of highly integrated multi-experiential packages, combining, in the case of Epcot for example, an architectural

environmental setting with live performances, authentic food, a marketplace experience, direct contact with natives of the country represented and, interestingly, an exhibition of their national treasures. This package, linked with travel and the hospitality industry, is promoted through a world-wide, satellite-linked network.

While the model of the theme park has proved a controversial discussion for museums, there were nevertheless valuable lessons. First, the parks demonstrated the importance of an integrated process of on-site public programme design that views the visit experience from the visitor's perspective as a single seamless activity. This planning process strengthens the links among the exhibition/interpretation activities, amenities management, building services and security, and marketing services in support of over-arching objectives for the visit. Second, the importance was clear of attending more actively to the visitor services component and developing a cohesive and comprehensive plan for parking, visitor circulation, information, ticketing, amenities management, effective way-finding and hosting. The aim was to make the logistics of the visitor experience invisible. A third lesson, reinforced by Kelly's work, was the necessity of understanding the phenomenon of cultural tourism, an industry which has yielded an estimated 10 billion dollars in Canada in 1986 alone. It demonstrates the importance of strong and effective partnerships with tourism, travel and hospitality industries and with other cultural partners in the region. The development of a critical mass of such partners was seen as an essential element in attracting and sustaining audiences for the CMC. The theme park also highlighted the utility of hospitality and customer service training, not only for visitor services staff, but indeed any staff with ongoing contact with the public--security, maintenance, interpreters, hosts, public relations and so on. Finally, the consideration of the theme park model forced a useful discussion on the differences between the types of institution. While elements of our new building--the IMAX/Omnimax cinema, the theatre, the attention to visitor services, large-scale festival events and the growing link with the tourist industry--appear to replicate aspects of these large tourist leisure destinations, it was our role as a repository of the national treasures, as a place in which the collective memory of Canadian legacy is preserved, our potential as a site for <u>meaningful</u> leisure activity and as a destination for cultural pilgrimage which would serve to distinguish the CMC and to give it a unique place in the arena of cultural tourism.

The integration of live interpretation with exhibitions had been explored, but not extensively used in the past by the CMC. Further consideration was prompted by its extensive use at Epcot, the success of living history museums and the growing body of experience and adaptation of the methodology in traditional museum

settings. The size of the new facility and extensive use of fully and partially reconstructed settings as an exhibit technique would permit the full range of animation from demonstrations through first and third person interpretation to complete dramatic pieces, ambulatory theatre and festivals. While labour-intensive, it would be useful in providing that responsive bridge to the diverse audiences the museum had to reach. As an overlay to the primarily static exhibit, it would be used to further interpret objects and themes, to introduce material of immediate social concern, to support controversial subject matter (and whimsy), to present differing cultural perspectives and to demonstrate societal process and change. The technique would be used to bring alive oral tradition, myths, dance and values, a first step in the conversation of intercultural encounter. It offered the opportunity to introduce the contrast of artistic interpretation of a culture or event with that yielded by the scientific process. Most importantly, it would be used to engage the public in dialogue and questioning and provide a forum for contributing their own knowledge to the exhibition. Planning had to address such issues as scientific control over artistic interpretation, the difficulty in crossing cultural barriers of understanding ritual and values, impact on conservation and security standards, and the balance and integration of live and stand-alone interpretation.

The introduction of theatre was also seen as an important element in a building that had been designed as a highly symbolic and ritual space, a building that could be called a form of narrative architecture with its "monumental declaration of space-time hierarchies."[2] A calendar of seasonal ritual occasions would drive a round of festival and highly celebratory events such as pow-wows and potlatch. Television would serve not only to extend these events nationally, but eventually through satellite links to place these events in their regional and sometimes global context and to invite interchange. This extensive introduction of theatre in a museum setting, particularly a museum of human history, was important because, as Murray Schafer would argue, it begins to bring us back to an understanding of the timeless rituals, the cycles of nature, and the meaning of celebration and participation in cultures in which there was no proscenium and balcony, no separation of people into actors and audience.

No public programming developed in the last decade of the 20th century could fail to respond to the demands of the emerging "information age," characterized as one in which information, data and technological expertise replace mass-produced commodities as a basis for wealth and status. This shift has some obvious implications for the museum as it began to consider a role as an information or resource centre. As George MacDonald has pointed out, collections become valued as central icons in an information system and the provision to the public of as direct a physical and intellectual interaction as possible becomes critical. The range

of such resources the museum must make available is broadened; photographs, oral history tapes, film footage, research notes, catalogue cards and so on, once regarded as tools or by-products of the internal research process, are now identified as an important resource for the general public as is the capacity to readily search, identify and link these materials. Issues such as the right to information and privacy must be resolved. The museum's expertise in organizing and interpreting such heritage information and material culture becomes a resource in its own right. The public needs to gain access to staff not only as subject experts, but also as facilitators or guides in the research and interpretive process. Providing such new researchers an understanding of the values and ethics that inform the use of information on other cultures becomes important, as does basic understanding of the varying levels of precision that attend such data. Perhaps most essential, however, in this information age is the museum's skill in pattern-making and synthesis and to sort and give meaning to the vast array of information they receive daily. In developing its role as resource centre, the museum reviewed its impact across the operation. Exhibits would be designed to facilitate as direct an interaction between the visitor and the collections as possible, moving from case installations to more open display methods. Perhaps more importantly, exhibitions would be used to demonstrate how a whole array of heritage information can be combined and organized and then reinterpreted against another theme. This demanded a movement away from exhibits that fragment and freeze information into static and linear storylines, restricted even further by an overdependence on labelling as a major interpretive support. Reconstructed environments, for example, could not only be effective in setting artifacts in a social and natural context, but in providing a basis on which an overlay of multi-experiential interpretive programmes and products--animation pieces, audioguides, interactive computer programmes--would help the public reconfigure and reinterpret that information in other ways, seeing new patterns and connections emerge from the same material.

Carefully forged links between the exhibitions, library, reserve collections and staff would also become important in enabling the interested public to move from the rather generalized level of information in exhibits to increasingly direct, unmediated access to the full range of resources housed by the institution. The establishment of the Médiathèque, a combination of library and resource centre supported by the powerful information technologies would form an electronic portal to the artifact collections, museum archival material, photograph and film collections, and staff. It would also ultimately link its information to those of other institutions, acting as a terminal in a heritage data-bank for Canada. The Médiathèque would support public programmes designed to facilitate public use of the institution's resources against their own agenda. Not only would the model of the eco-museum be

useful in this regard, but for those requiring some assistance, the principles of andragogy emerging from the field of adult education would form a primary guide: the learning process is self-directed; the visitor or learner is perceived as an increasingly self-directed organism; his or her experience is regarded as a rich resource in its own right for learning; internal curiosity is seen as the key motivation; issues explored tend to be problem- rather than subject-centred, growing out of the interests and needs of the visitor; and, finally, the museum acts as facilitator in this process.

The implications of the information age in prompting a modification of the museum's role as a resource centre was matched by its growing interest in the impact of the electronic media on its business. On the one hand, television, radio and film had greatly increased awareness of the cultural multiplicity of Canada and the world, and from that perspective visitors were bringing a much higher level of awareness to the museum. At the same time, as media critics such as Neil Postman point out, such awareness is not necessarily profound. Because of their structural constraints, the electronic media have introduced large-scale incoherence and irrelevance because of the provision of information in a virtually context-free fashion. Other cultures can appear exotic and curious with specific and locally relevant meaning stripped out in favour of more generalized ambiguity. Not only cost, then, precluded large-scale use of the mass media as a likely major partner in generating intercultural understanding. Of greater interest to the CMC were the parallel structures--cable networks, videotape distribution and the emerging field of two-way interactive telecommunications. In the United States, there had been a number of experiments utilizing these "space bridges"--real-time interactive video links--to explore ways of facilitating human interaction. Two such experiments, undertaken by the artists Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinovitz, were particularly useful as models. "The Satellite Arts Project," conducted in 1977 with NASA, linked two dancers in California and two in Maryland--by satellite--to create a dance that existed only in the "thin" virtual space created by collapsing deep geographic space. In the second experiment, "Hole in Space," video cameras and rear projection screens were installed in display windows on Broadway in Los Angeles and at the Lincoln Center in New York. For two hours on each of three consecutive evenings, the locations were connected by satellite, each screen displaying life-size figures of people on the opposite coast. It created, the artists said, a "kind of virtual eye contact,"[3] a hole in space/time, in the urban streetscape through which one group could hear and see the other. The authors describe the emergence of a collective intimacy associated with tribal cultures, a communal spirit thought to be lost in the modern technological environment. The screens became a microcosm of the process of acculturation. During the first day there was discovery and experimentation; by the second day

messages, flirtations, family reunions and games of charades organized by total strangers. By the third day there was chaos as excited crowds pressed "for chance to gaze through the electronic hole and meet a returning gaze from across the continent."[4] These experiments inspired the question of how the museum could use the power of telecommunications internally and externally as a means to extend its ability to assist groups construct a perception of themselves and to facilitate intercultural understanding. Gene Youngblood, in describing the approach taken to the telecommunications experiments, made a useful distinction between conversation and communication. Derived from the Latin "a shared space," communication involves interaction in a common context, in a domain of consensus which makes communication possible and determines the meaning of all that is said. Often, cultures in their first genuine encounter do not share those common idioms, particularly in ritual activity. Conversation, however, from the Latin "to turn around together," permits through discussion and mutual questioning successive approximations of a shared reality until a new consensus and a new context have been woven together in which communication can take place. Could the intimacy and anonymity of telecommunications provide a means of that first step of conversation? The Museum would test that question through the integration of television production and dissemination capacity into the museum's exhibits, performing spaces and classrooms and build the element of telecommunications into its planning. The notion of a planetary network might occur first within museums.

Changing demographics, the impact of a growing partnership of individuals, groups and museums in heritage concerns, the contrasting models of eco-museums and Epcot, the power of live animation and telecommunications, the implications of an information-rich society--all played a significant role in determining the shape of public programmes in the new CMC. There were clearly many other areas of concern--the over-arching need to reflect a bilingual and multicultural Canadian reality; changes in the educational systems; a need for increased revenue generation; the growing role of volunteerism, which had a major impact. The result? George MacDonald has called the CMC a crossroad of culture. It would target at least four levels of cultural bridging. First, we would attempt to provide the environment and tools whereby Canadians from all groups could define and represent their own heritage and values both to themselves and to others. It is an aspiration which would involve significant changes in our operation and a major challenge as "control" over the perceived quality and content of information and values presented within the museum were frequently released. It would be critical, however, to make this leap if the museum were to act as a mirror for Canadians; if the richness and paradoxes, dark and light sides, of our society were to be genuinely reflected; and if Canadians were to use the museum in part to regain the sense of defining their territory and of giving witness to their existence and value. The

museum would continue to provide the scientific representation of Canada's heritage and its cultures, yet another level of cultural exchange, as one culture represents another. Such a presentation, however, would explore multiple perspectives on issues and events, within a framework for their thoughtful examination. The process and values which would inform scientific interpretation would be made visible and as important as the content itself. At a third level, the museum would engage artists and their art even more actively than in the past as yet another way of interpreting and synthesizing the larger identity of culture, albeit through an individual perspective. And finally, we would begin to tackle that most difficult of tasks, to create an environment which supports and facilitates intercultural exchange--a place in which cultures can first converse and then communicate.

Are these directions new? Not all and certainly they are not by any means new to other institutions. But they do reflect the uniqueness of a particular human venture--one that is both exciting and terrifying--the establishment of a museum in which we would finally try to encounter what has been called the "shock of the other."[5] Interpretation at the Museum of Civilization would remain a process of bridge-building.

---

1. Robert Kelly, "Museums as Status Symbols II: Attaining a State of **Having Been**," reprinted from Advances in Non-Profit Marketing, ed. R. Belk, (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1984), p.4.

2. George MacDonald, "Crossroads of Culture: The Canadian Museum of Civilization" (Paper presented at the public lecture series Towards the 21t Century: New Directions for Canada's National Museums, Ottawa, 20 October 1987).

3. Gene Youngblood, "Virtual Space: The Electronic Environments of Mobile Image," 13.

4. Ibid, p.13.

5. "Millennium: Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World" (10-part television series, Washington, D.C.: Adrian Mole Productions, Inc.), p.1.

ENTRE LA TOUR DE BABEL ET LE CHEVAL DE TROIE

Paul Carpentier
Directeur adjoint, Collections et recherche
Musée canadien des civilisations

Lorsqu'on m'a demandé de livrer ma pensée sur le statut du conservateur dans les musées de la fin des années 1980, je pris une longue respiration et la gardai fort longtemps. Comment allais-je m'y prendre pour dénoncer l'extinction systématique d'une profession sans tomber dans de plates jérémiades?

Puis, j'ai lu ce que l'on avait écrit sur les conservateurs au cours des trente dernières années... Les articles sont nombreux, et pourtant, il s'agit d'un long dialogue de sourds. D'une part, les conservteurs, vêtus de l'armure de Don Quichotte et montés sur une Rossinante fatiguée, parcourent une forêt de moulins de plus en plus dense. D'autre part, les "muséologues" vêtus de leur froque d'inquisiteur, et ayant perdu leur latin, se livrent à la chasse aux socières. Le ton de ces échanges est toujours belliqueux; les uns posent en victimes injustement menacées dans leurs droits acquis, les autres se comportent en impérialistes détenteurs de la seule vérité et de tous les droits.

Or, il me semble que tout ce brouhaha repose sur de fausses perceptions, sur des erreurs de perspectives qui causent des glissements sémantiques et ont comme résultat que les gens à l'emploi des musées se parlent comme les habitants de la tour de Babel.

A la fin des années 1940, le monde se remet de la guerre. Pendant que les philosophes déversent en librairie le récit de leurs explorations de l'absurde ou de l'existence, les scientifiques et les historiens de l'art poussent un soupir de soulagement, croyant que c'est la fin des vaches maigres. A cette époque, les musées étaient encore des espèces de vitrines ou l'on étalaient les découvertes des explorateurs, fussent-ils de retour d'une expédition au coeur d'une civilisation encore inconnue ou d'un saut dans le futur parce qu'ils avaient percé le symbolisme d'une oeuvre artistique. C'était bien avant que les éléments de culture étrangère ne soient emballés de clichés pour les rendre "désirables" auprès des masses de consommateurs. Il y a quarante ans, on ne remettait pas en question le "rôle" des conservateurs de musée, pas plus qu'on ne remettait en question le rôle d'un(e) journaliste, d'un(e) cinéaste ou de quelqu'autre gens de métier.

Dix ans plus tard, le monde bouillonne. Les premiers progrès concrets menant le continent africain vers l'autonomie se

produisent. La guerre froide atteint son apogée et imprime dans les esprits la notion de superpuissance qui remplace celle d'empire. L'industrie d'après-guerre a adopté un style qui annonce de façon certaine la première vague du "choc du futur" : la permanence laisse sa place à l'éphémère. Les musées subissent le contre-coup de ce moment. L'idée de présenter des expositions moins permanentes émerge, et apparaissent les premières questions sur le rôle de conservateur dans un musée. Comment équilibrer les multiples tâches de la fonction de conservateur[1]? La recherche scientifique était au coeur même de la fonction, elle ne peut être amputée ou même touchée. L'enseignement était le cordon ombilical assurant la survie de l'esprit de la recherche, il ne peut être coupé. La conservation étant essentielle à l'existence même du sujet de la recherche, elle ne peut être négligée. La nécessité de préparer des expositions étant désormais une condition première de soutien en ressources, il faut bien y consacrer un minimum d'énergie. Le dilemne du chasseur devant deux lièvres à la fois allait marquer les conservateurs très profondément pour les décennies à venir. La question avait été posée, mais aucune solution n'avait été suggérée par les conservateurs. Oh! on sentait bien le sous-entendu : quelque vague réminiscence de la multiplication des pains. Aussi, les responsables de musées ont cherché une réponse de leur cru qui allait dans ce sens. De nouveaux employés ont joint les rangs pour prêter main-forte. Des spécialistes de la conservation ont ouvert leurs laboratoires, des services éducatifs ont poussé comme des champignons et des designers ont installé leurs tables à dessin entre l'atelier de fabrication et les salles d'exposition.

Donc, il y a vingt ans, quand on se pose la question à savoir quel est le rôle du conservateur, les données sont tout à fait différentes.

Il y a désormais plusieurs types de conservateurs. Certains conservateurs font de la conservation, d'autres font de l'éducation, d'autres préparent des expositions et ainsi de suite. Car, en fragmentant les tâches des conservateurs d'autrefois en plusieurs aires de spécialisation, on n'avait pas pris soin de désigner les nouvelles fonctions différemment en les distinguant par un mot propre. On a plutôt qualifié paresseusement le terme connu, "conservateur de", en y accollant la fonction. Il y a donc eu une certaine confusion tant au banc des jouerus que parmi les spectateurs. Dorénavant, les gens qui allaient tenter de définir le rôle de conservateur le feraient dans un climat de rapports de forces. Les nouveaux conservateurs désirant affirmer leur statut au sein de l'institution ont senti le besoin de pousser dans le coin les occupants de la maison. Il leur fut facile de stigmatiser les anciens avec des expressions accusatrices comme "curatorial narcissism", "caste system", "high priesthood of curators" ou "cult of the curator[2]" au moment où une vague de populisme déferlait sur la société. Les anciens, sur la défensive, ont répliqué en étalant

les états de service de la profession au moment de l'âge d'or. Il n'en fallait pas davantage pour créer le complexe de la tour d'ivoire, connu maintenant aussi bien de ceux/celles qui en sont affligés que des autres qui ont à le subir.

Ce remue-ménage n'était pourtant que la pointe d'un iceberg aperçu à la fin des années 1960. L'institution même était en révolution profonde. On parlait de redéfinir non seulement le rôle de conservateur mais bien le musée lui-même. Rappelez-vous de ce temps ou G-H Rivière préparait le Creusot et introduisait dans le jargon du métier le terme d'écomusée! Les conférences nationales et internationales se sont multipliées, et nombreux sont les prophètes qui ont profité de l'occasion pour décrire ce dont aurait l'air le nouveau "musée-hors-les-murs" en lui opposant l'image repoussante du grenier poussiéreux dans lequel le conservateur traditionnel se confondait avec les breloques inutiles sous les toiles d'araignées.

C'est aussi l'époque ou le Canada, après avoir célébre son centenaire en parsemant le pays de centres culturels, groupe ses musées nationaux en corporation et se dote d'une politique des musées ayant comme assises la décentralisation et la démocratisation du patrimoine culturel.

Des infrastructures sont mises en place pour venir en aide à la vie muséale tant par le gouvernement fédéral que par certaines provinces. Les résultats sont incontestables, même s'ils sont fort et souventes fois critiqués. Il y a maintenant une communauté importante du monde culturel au pays, et personne ne peut plus l'ignorer; pas plus que l'on peut ignorer le Tiers- Monde...

On se retrouve donc, il y a dix ans, avec une foule nombreuse et très bigarrée de "muséologues" qui se lancent dans des mégaprojets. Des plans d'agrandissement, de construction, de modernisation remplissent les espaces déjà trop petits des musées que l'on veut oublier. Souvent laissés pour compte dans l'élaboration de tels plans, les conservateurs n'en sont pas moins invités à participer au mouvement en donnant un certain corps à des "blocs busters" ou en mettant de la chair sur un squelette qui leur est présenté sous le terme alléchant et parfois fallacieux de concept.

Après quarante ans d'évolution et de révolutions au sein des musées, qu'est-ce qui en est du statut de conservateur?

A l'exception de certains musées qui reposent sur les épaules d'une seule personne à tout faire, le rôle de conservateur est paradoxalement tout à fait renouvelé et plus près que jamais de ce qu'il était à l'origine.

La clef du paradoxe réside au sein de la double diversification des fonctions dans les musées et des musées eux-mêmes.

D'une part, toutes les tâches périfériques au rôle de conservateur, mais essentielles au bon fonctionnement d'un musée, ont fait l'objet de la création de postes distincts. Un(e) gestionnaire des collections voit à ce que les objets soient pris en charge dès le transfert du droit de propriété, à ce qu'il soit transporté, enregistré, catalogué, mis en réserves selon des normes et procédures officiellement entérinées et surveillé sa circulation ultérieure. Un groupe de restaurateurs/trices s'assure des normes de conservation et se livre aux traitements jugés nécessaires. Des spécialistes de la diffusion coordonnent publications et expositions. Et des administrateurs/trices sont là pour maintenir les affaires du musée en bon ordre. Il ne reste plus aux conservateurs que leur fonction originelle sans autres tracas.

D'aure part, les musées ont diversifié la nature de leur opérations et offrent un éventail varié de contextes de travail. Entre les écomusées et les centres d'exposition, on retrouve le parc historique et le musée organisés en salles permanentes ou temporaires. Il y a l'embarras du choix.

Et pourtant, les conservateurs se plaignent toujours. Serait-ce là leur véritable rôle?

Eh bien non. Ce qui s'est produit, c'est que le jeu a été faussé. Le portrait si parfait tracé ci-dessus est en effet plein de vices cachés. Parmi ces derniers, deux prennent une importance particulière en ce qu'ils se situent au nadir et au zénith de la sphère d'activités du conservateur. Il s'agit du comportement de l'administration et des antécédents de plusieurs nouveaux conservateurs.

Au moment ou l'expansion des musées en nombre et en importance prit son essor, il ne s'agissait pas d'un effet de génération spontanée. Des gens avaient travaillé avec acharnement pour en arriver là. Encore aujourd'hui, même les musées les mieux nantis se plaignent de ne recevoir que les miettes du trésor public. A ce moment-là, les miettes se faisaient plutôt rares. Et pour convaincre les représentants du pouvoir de délier les cordons de la bourse, les administrateurs de musées (plusieurs étant d'anciens conservateurs) durent faire preuve d'imagination et de ténacité. Mais, dès que les premiers gains furent enregistrés, ils commirent le péché de concupiscence.

En effet, on a vite reconnu ce qui était l'évidence même. Les bailleurs de fonds d'aujourd'hui n'ont rien en commun avec les mécènes d'hier. Ils accordent leur soutien à la façon de spéculateurs qui font des placements à la condition que ces

derniers rapportent. Sauf que l'intérêt attendu n'est pas de nature pécuniaire mais bien politique. Ce qui devait arriver arriva. L'administration des musées s'est coupée des fonctions des musées. En même temps, le comportement a changé. La gent des musées, habituée qu'elle était à faire la démonstration des choses afin d'en avoir une juste appréhension dut faire face à un nouveau discours.

Heidegger a dit du bavardage : "il est à la portée de tout le monde, et non seulement nous soulage de la tâche d'une compréhension authentique, mais il produit une compréhensibilité indifférente pour laquelle plus rien n'existe d'incertain[3]". Et les musées se sont livrés au bavardage... qui est un langage tout à fait adapté à la conduite de projets, le nouveau mode de vie adopté. Ce style de gestion a eu pour effet d'augmenter le support financier, mais du même coup, plaçait l'institution dans une situation antinomique.

D'une part, la gestion par projet repose sur la constitution d'un groupe de ressources qui ne dure que le temps de réalisation du projet et se dissout par la suite. D'autre part, l'objet même de tout projet entrepris par un musée est essentiellement permanent.

Dans l'enthousiasme du moment, les musées ont ajouté la négligence à la concupiscence. L'obligation de livrer le produit dans de cours délais établis par les pourvoyeurs de financement peut expliquer une partie de l'erreur. Il n'en reste pas moins que les nouveaux muséologues ont été recrutés et introduits dans la plupart des organisations muséales sans que l'on prenne le temps nécessaire de distinguer clairement les fonctions les unes des autres. Conséquemment, on assista rapidement à l'avènement d'une situation de capharnaüm où chaque parti avait ses raisons de lutter contre les autres. L'urgence de chaque projet accordant une importance prioritaire à des activités périphériques, les fonctions essentielles de collectionnement, de documentation basée sur la recherche, de conservation et d'analyse dont les résultats sont présentés sous forme d'exposition et de publication ont non seulement été reléguées au second plan, mais souvent mises au service des premières. Ou, comme l'exprime si bien Jean Trudel, "conservateurs et collections permanentes deviennent des cautions morales à ces activités[4]". Les conservateurs étant des gens triés sur le gril en fonction de leur maîtrise scientifique d'un champ de connaissances, leurs "collègues" nouvellement arrivés et du coup leurs égaux n'ont pas voulu être laissés pour compte. Ils/elles n'étaient ni anthropologues ni ethnologues, etc; ils/elles seraient donc muséologues. Encore que l'on mit un certain temps avant d'énoncer avec un minimum de clarté en quoi consistait cette nouvelle "logie", à croire que seul le suffixe importait. Et quand quelqu'un s'est aventuré à rendre une définition du néologisme, ceux/celles qui se réclamaient du titre ont immédiatement réagi en

fuyant par en avant. Sans doute étaient-ils/elles toujours muséologues, mais leur activité relevaient maintenant de la "nouvelle muséologie". Et nouveau prend ici son sens de créateur, donc, non définissable faute d'objet fini. Dans une telle situation, y-a-t-il moyen de réétablir un certain équilibre non pas entre les différentes tâches du conservateur comme on le demandait il y a trente ans, mais entre les différentes factions du musée?

On pourra faire quelques progrès à condition que certaines fausses idées disparaissent. L'une d'entre elles prête aux conservateurs une incapacité intrinsèque de s'adapter à tout changement. Au contraire, le changement est très familier à tout scientifique digne de ce nom. Comme dit Thomas Kuhn: "la science est un processus de tension variée dans lequel alternent des périodes d'accumulation intense de connaissances et des périodes de crises qui brisent la continuité antérieure et conduisent à des remises en question parfois fondamentales[5]".

Les conservateurs des années 1990 sont, eux aussi, conscients du contexte de travail tout à fait différent dans lequel ils/elles ont à jouer un rôle précis. Cependant, cela ne veut pas dire que les conservateurs d'aujourd'hui et de demain doivent faire fi des bases mêmes de leurs disciplines scientifiques respectives de façon à cautionner certaines attitudes de "nouveaux illétrés". Comme tout autre personne à l'emploi d'un musée, le/la conservateur a droit au respect inhérent à son rôle.

Une autre fausse idée investit les conservateurs d'une incapacité chronique de communication due à la nature ésotérique de leur langage doublée d'un penchant incontrôlable au paternalisme intellectuel. Là encore, il s'agit d'un préjugé sans fondement qui peut être nié par la statistique aussi bien que par la logique. Il y a autant de chance de rencontrer un/e communicateur-né/e chez les conservateurs dans un échantillon égal d'employés assignés à d'autres tâches. De plus, certaines disciplines reposent grandement sur la cueillette de données initiales par la voie de l'entrevue orale. Ceux et celles qui réussissent à se tailler une carrière dans l'une ou l'autre de ces sciences ne peuvent pas être incapables de communication, ou alors ce sont des charlatans fort habiles.

Au-delà des fausses idées, il y a une question d'organisation pure et simple. En effet, le rythme fou imposé par le style d'opération par projets qu'ont adopté tous les grands musées et une bonne partie des moins grands fait souvent oublier les principes de base d'un bon fonctionnement. Deux de ces principes ont des conséquences directes sur l'attitude et la capacité d'agir des conservateurs.

Le premier concerne la nature même du projet. Il peut fort bien arriver (en fait cela se produit maintenant fréquemment) qu'un projet ne nécessite pas la participation d'un/e conservateur. Dans un tel cas, s'obstiner à y assigner un/e conservateur sous prétexte qu'il/elle est sous la main est une garantie de produit médiocre et d'insatisfaction mutuelle chez les intéressés.

Le second régit la structure d'une équipe de travail. Quand les grandes lignes d'un projet ont été établies et que les principales tâches ont été identifiées, on néglige trop souvent de définir précisément les tâches respectives de tous les intervenants. Il s'ensuit un rapport de pouvoirs qui utilise l'outil niveleur par excellence du monde moderne, la réunion, laquelle repose sur ce que l'on appelle fallacieusement le consensus. "Cela est fait avec une humilité tout à fait médiévale et exactement opposée à l'esprit moderne, bourgeoise, issu de la Renaissance; la personnalité de celui qui propose ne compte plus et la proposition ne doit pas passer pour une découverte individuelle, mais pour le fruit d'une décision collective, toujours rigoureusement anonyme[6]." Or l'anonymat est contre nature chez les conservateurs. Leur formation professionnelle les pousse à exercer leur capacité de décomposer un concept en ses éléments essentiels d'en saisir les rapports et d'en donner un schéma d'ensemble offert à l'appréhension.

C'est ce que l'on désigne par le terme "contenu" dans le jargon muséal. Et c'est un acte essentiellement créateur, d'où le désir très légitime d'en garder le crédit.

Même si l'idée avait été avancée il y a plus d'un demi-siècle par Paul Sachs, ce n'est que récemment que l'on a généralisé la préparation d'expositions par équipes et obtenu certains succès. Et là où il y a eu réussite, ce n'est pas, comme ont pu le prétendre certains, à cause d'une empathie des caractères individuels, main bien parce que chaque personne connaissait suffisamment son métier pour ne pas se sentir menacée et que le groupe a développé à un haut niveau le respect mutuel. Ceci peut se produire accidentellement si le hasard rassemble sur un même projet des personnes de grandes compétences et très bien équilibrées. Mais comme le hasard se fout souvent de notre gueule, il est préférable de lui forcer la main. Et cela peut se faire en attribuant à chaque participant un rôle rigoureusement décrit de façon à prévenir à la fois le parasitisme des cancres et la suffisance des arrivistes quelle que soit leur fonction.

Dans un tel contexte de travail, l'expérience démontre que même les conservateurs peuvent offrir ce que l'on est en droit d'attendre de leur part, soit une connaissance générale de la collection et une connaissance spécifique de l'objet (d'art) permettant de la présenter dans un contexte invitant à

l'appréciation et/ou à la compréhension du phénomène culturel dont il est issu.

Présenté ainsi, il ne semble pas y avoir de "problème du conservateur". Mais tout n'est pas si simple. Les préjugés qui empêchent la réalisation de pareilles conditions de travail sont ancrés très profondément. Et comme ils ont dominé les débuts de la dernière ère du monde muséal, ils ont déterminé les principaux paramètres d'une nouvelle écologie. Et ce mouvement affecte un système fort complexe. Tellement, qu'à moins d'un acte combiné de prise de conscience et de volonté d'intervention, il y a peu de chance de redresser la situation. Et le nouvel équilibre devra être défini après avoir identifié et distingué les herbivores et les carnivores formant cette nouvelle faune.

Déjà, il est possible de pressentir que certaines autorités sont à ce point assimilées par le nouvel environnement, qu'elles portent toutes leurs énergies à créer une nouvelle réalité sous un ancient vocable. Il est de plus en plus fréquent d'entendre parler de musée sans collection, ou de salle de spectacle, ou encore d'agora où se manifesterait la culture en gestation.

Il n'est pas loin le jour où l'on devra trouver un terme autre que musée pour désigner de pareilles institutions, si la tendance se maintient. C'est à se demander si le jour où la muséologie est entrée dans les musées, les conservateurs n'ont pas, comme les Troyens, reçu un cadeau de Grec.

Mais, en éternel optismiste habitué à regarder le côté noir des situations, je demeure convaincu que toute société voudra toujours conserver dans un lieu public les témoins matériels de ses réalisations passées et présentes afin de s'y reconnaître et se présenter à l'Étranger. Il y a donc place pour des musées, de toutes natures sans doute, et parmi ceux-là, des musées qui auront des collections, et des conservateurs pour constituer ses collections, les étudier et les présenter... puisque c'est ce que font les conservateurs.

---

1. E.H. Colbert, "On Being a Curator", dans Curator, I:1, 1958.

2. W.A. Burns, "The Curator-as-Canary", dans Curator, XIV:3, 1971.

3. M. Heidegger, Sein und Zeit.

4. Jean Trudel, "De grandes attentes, mais quelles attentes?", dans Muse, 5:3, Octobre 1987.

5. T. Kuhn, La structure de la révolution scientifique. (Chicago 1970).

6. Umberto Ecco, La guerre du faux. (Paris 1985).

COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN CURATORSHIP
NMST'S RETURN TO CURATORIAL BASICS IN THE '90s

Geoff Ryder
A/Assistant Director, Collections and Research
National Museum of Science and Technology

In the Autumn 1985 number of the Canadian Museums Association journal, Muse, an editorial entitled "Missing in Action" described the bleak situation faced by curators in Canadian art galleries. Institutional neglect and decreased priority were blamed for the decline of what was considered an all pervasive function within museum operation.[1]

In a subsequent issue, Muse published a conversation among professional curators on the subject of "being a curator," which addressed the themes of the earlier editorial. The fundamentals of research and collections development in curatorship and the weighing of public service versus academic responsibilities, as well as the varied roles curators must play within their institutions, offered further insight into issues facing the profession.[2]

While curators at the National Museum of Science and Technology recognized the issues under discussion, the reality of the situation was only beginning to become apparent at the museum, where the '70s and '80s were considered the halcyon days of the curatorial pursuit, yet the status quo offered little in terms of institutional or professional growth.

The changing role of the curator at the National Museum of Science and Technology (NMST) can either be viewed as the retarded evolution of a museum function, or as a revolutionary break with the past. In either event, it is change that is the result of factors over which the curator has only varying degrees of control and is based on a shift from old to new environmental realities. It is difficult to separate past custom from the reality of the present. The bewildering number of influences that have affected curatorial activity at NMST, particularly in the 1980s, has led to a loss of professional perspective. In a small under-funded institution, it is quite common for senior staff, which includes curators, to perform duties which would be overseen by a separate division in larger museums. In order to properly appreciate the changing role of curatorial work at NMST, it is necessary to review the duties of a curator in light of past and current practice, and relate them to the more variable organizational influences with a view to forecasting what the approach to curatorial duties may be in the closing decade of this century.

The creation of the National Museum of Science and Technology in 1967 was a break with tradition. What has been seen by some as an artificial separation of the field of science and technology from Canadian social history within the national museums was for others a revolutionary and exciting concept, particularly for museum visitors who had not experienced the mix of traditional museum and science centre. The official purpose of the museum incorporated the statement of purpose for the National Museums of Canada[3] and gave further recognition "that collection, classification, preservation and display of objects comprise the primary, purpose of the museum and ... are activities which distinguish museums from other organizations within the Government of Canada."[4] Research was also given recognition in terms of its use in exhibits, response to inquiries, acquisition and publication.

In a 1971 report to its Board of Trustees, the museum outlined five themes which it hoped to develop over a five-year period.

1) The methods of science and technology--how man has gone about discovering the principles and underlying laws in his environment and how he goes about making things.

2) How man has overcome time, and distance in this vast country.

3) How man has changed his living habits as a result of scientific and technological advances.

4) How man has changed his environment with science and technology.

5) Projections into the future of how we are to use science and technology for the betterment of mankind.[5]

This was to be accomplished through the development of collections and the use of highly sophisticated exhibits and demonstrations relating to the fundamental sciences and modern technology. It was also planned that the museum would pursue a national image through travelling exhibits, publications and training and assistance to other museums and universities.

These ambitious goals, enumerated four years after the opening of the museum, reflected the vision of a new role for a national museum, as the museum addressed not only the history of science and technology but scientific literacy related to current and future directions and the impact of technology.

> A modern science museum also should be completely up to date as that it is a natural place to turn to for the answers to scientific and technological questions at the time they arise. ... This means really that a science and technology museum should be a natural centre of scientific and technological literacy. Its presence should thus be felt across the country. ... In all its

> activities, it will try to produce a feeling and an understanding of the present human situation at the same time that it fosters a sense of the debt that we all owe to the past and a realization of some of the future possibilities open to mankind.[6]

With a new role which combined traditional museology with a need for current scientific and technological expertise, NMST sought initially to staff five positions for curatorial "specialists" (ground transportation, communications technology, mining technology, industrial technology and agricultural technology). Although the number of subject fields which the museum addressed in order to respond to its mandate would vary from 16 to 20 during the years 1967 to 1987, the actual number of curatorial positions did not, remaining at approximately five.

The qualifications for these positions required a university degree but, more significantly, experience in one of the technological areas. The rationale for such qualifications was evident by considering the museum mandate and the duties of the position. Curators would be required to "establish and develop the division, to present the division's collections and displays in such a way as to provide a knowledge of the field in relation to the growth of Canada, to establish display standards." They would also be required to do research and plan the publication of popular and scholarly publications, and organize public lectures, travelling exhibits and educational programmes.[7]

Their specific expertise was for collection development and interpretation of collections in exhibits and demonstrations. Curatorial, education and exhibit functions were extremely closely related; in fact, it was not until 1982 that a formal Public Programmes Section was established. In the period between 1967 and 1987, the failure to acquire necessary resources reinforced a quite different curatorial role. Within this environment, some of the museum's highest profile activities were initiated and carried out by curatorial staff. Demonstration programmes included Electronic Music, which informed and entertained audiences from the east coast to Saskatchewan, agricultural demonstrations related to farm industries such as pump and shingle making, and period land improvement technology through the operation of a steam ditching machine.

The direct participation of curators in demonstration programmes was seen as an effective means of not only sharing their knowledge but also as a way to reach potential sources of artifacts.

It was also in the mid-1970s that the nationally syndicated "Stargazing" column appeared as well as "Skysheets" with a national distribution of 15,000 subscribers. These two activities were

conceived and authored by the museum's curator of astronomy.

Education programmes within the museum as planned and implemented by curatorial staff included the on-going operation of a letterpress printing "shop" and an evening astronomy programme using the museum's 1901, 15-inch refractor telescope (originally housed at the Dominion Observatory). Curators were directly involved in the planning and operation of special exhibits for school breaks and official holidays. The National Museum of Science and Technology was well known for its July 1st programmes in which all museum employees took part. Prior to the development of Festival Canada and extensive activity on Parliament Hill, NMST was the "only show in town" for Canadians visiting the capital on that holiday.

The technological expertise of the curator became as integral a part of such demonstrations as it did for the development of exhibits. It was the curator's intimate knowledge of technological artifacts obtained through years of work experience that facilitated such development and was key to the curatorial function. Curators were an extension of the knowledge contained within the artifacts themselves.

The inadequacy of human and financial resources was one of the major influences on the development of the museum and the curatorial function. The outcome was a museum which created its own "culture of poverty," and staff learned to use the resources at hand and to divide the workload. Curators shared the subject areas that the museum was called upon to address, either by affinity with their own subject areas, through personal interest or by necessity. Failure to staff the position of curator of transportation resulted in the division of that subject between the curator of communications (automotive technology), the curator of industrial technology (rail and transportation) and the curator of agriculture (non-motorized transportation). The curator of industrial technology was also responsible for technologies relating to fire, marine, mining and engineering. Most significant was this curator's responsibility for rail technology. The steam train programme (1201) became vital to the image of the museum, not only locally but nationally. Its operation has remained under curatorial control.

Initially, collections at the National Museum of Science and Technology consisted of artifacts transferred to it from other government departments, which included the National Research Council, Canadian National Railways and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Perhaps the largest collection was acquired in what has been regarded by some as an ad-hoc separation of the museum from the National Museum of Man (Canadian Museum of Civilization). It included agricultural artifacts with varying

provenance, but particularly material from the Central Experimental Farm, transportation, communications and industrial technology artifacts. In an effort to avoid inevitable overlaps between the two institutions, it was agreed that the History Division of the National Museum of Man would collect artifacts related to Canadian social, economic and cultural history and the NMST could collect in the areas of industrial, technological and scientific history.

The method of interpretation of collections has always been a particular characteristic of NMST. Viewed negatively by traditionally minded curators and conservators, the need to demonstrate technological artifacts in order to educate was pioneered as policy in 1967.

With a broad mandate and no coherent collection policy, the museum came to be recognized as the only Canadian institution with a comprehensive collection of scientific and technological artifacts. Curatorial response to public inquiries as well as those from other museums with regard to acquisition of artifacts resulted in what has been termed an "opportunistic" approach to collection development; yet with no formal framework based on research and policy and with no resources, the method was effective.

Museum holdings in specific curatorial areas such as communications grew with the donation of significant collections from companies such as Teleglobe Canada and the Canadian Marconi Company thereby strengthening the collection profile for the history of telecommunications in Canada. The Canadian Broadcasting Company similarly increased the research collection in the history of broadcasting.

The transfer of the Ontario Hydro Collection of approximately 3,400 artifacts to the museum in 1976 represented another highly significant acquisition. This unique collection traces the development of electrical technology in Ontario and in Canada from the turn of the century. With the artifacts came the associated responsibility for their storage and curatorial response to research and loan requests.

The mandate of the NMST was formalized in December 1987. Its object remained true to the principles on which the museum was founded: "... to foster scientific and technical literacy throughout Canada by collecting and preserving Canada's scientific and technological heritage, and by demonstrating the products and processes of science and technology as well as their economic, social and cultural relationships with society ..."[8] What has changed is the strategy used to realize this objective. The new strategy is based on the changes in the social, political and economic climate in Canada in the '80s. The devolution of the

National Museums of Canada, the move toward revenue generation and cost recovery, the awakening political interest in issues related to science and technology--all have contributed to the development of current strategic planning at the museum which will affect the role of curators. The recognition that the museums "mandate is beyond the scope of its resources" has resulted in a move toward the creation of "partnership agreements and cooperative efforts with industry, departments of government and universities as well as other museums and science centres."[9] The desire to "change the attitude of a nation" by making science and technology part of Canadian culture through education, including use of collections, is a goal which is heavily dependent on partnerships. These will provide requisite expertise, funds and profile hitherto unattainable through regular channels.

The museum's expected role in the implementation of the National Science and Technology Policy as a national showcase for the manufacturing sector, and its support of the sixth policy objective "to ensure that science and technology become an integral part of our culture," could conceivably direct the development of exhibits away from what has been viewed as a narrow curatorial perspective to something much more reactive. The concept of partnership has to date been very much a curatorial affair. Realizing that the exhibit development role for curators was dependent upon external resources, two exhibits were initiated within the collections area--"Well Done in Every Way," a Canadian Pacific centennial exhibit; and "It Started with Saunders," a celebration of 100 years of research at the Central Experimental Farm. In the case of the latter, the curator responsible sought and obtained funding from the Prairie Wheat Pools as well as the provision of a site at the Farm by Agriculture Canada. Such exhibits, complete with "front-end studies" and summative evaluations, have only brought curators at NMST in line with what other museums claim to be standard procedure for exhibit development. The role of the curator in the marketing of exhibit concepts is, however, a new responsibility, and one which is as yet not fully defined. It is not uncommon, however, for middle and even upper level management in "industry" to prefer talking to someone who can "speak their language," leaving the subsequent dotting of i's to marketing professionals.

The single most important partnership project for the close of the century is the Communications and Space exhibit. This project--which envisages the creation of three exhibit modules: Canada in Space, Communications and Graphic Arts--will require approximately 90,000 square feet of exhibit space and 20 million dollars. Emphasizing Canadian development and collections and tracing the scientific and technology history, current status and social and economic impact on Canadian society, the exhibits would benefit from resources provided by partners on several levels.

Provision of research and technical expertise as well as artifact loans are two ways in which industry or government departments may share in the project. Full responsibility regarding the nature and form of exhibits is left with curatorial and exhibit staff in order to "maintain the independent integrity of the establishment."[10]

The vigilance required of curatorial staff to ensure that the intellectual integrity of such partnership exhibits is maintained is obvious. Experience obtained in the production of "Well Done in Every Way" and its subsequent evaluation have reinforced this need. Despite claims of commercialism, the vast majority of visitors supported this "business history" type of exhibit. Undoubtedly, the success of such exhibits will increase the awareness of industry as to the potential of co-operative ventures with NMST. Will curators redirect their efforts to marketing activities in an attempt to increase collections access?

Conservation and restoration activity at NMST developed initially as an important aspect of the curatorial role based on the museum's mandate and interpretation style. It also developed in a kind of externally imposed vacuum. The use of some artifacts for interpretation since 1967 set classically trained conservators back on their heels. Such actions were anathema to conservation professionals, yet NMST was part of an international vanguard which realized that preservation of function as well as form could, in some cases, only be achieved through restoration and operation. The lack of conservation research and support of projects dealing with new construction materials associated with technological collections forced the museum to turn once again to curatorial staff whose technical expertise provided the requisite skill to restore artifacts, although often at the loss of correct procedure.

The development of a distinct conservation/restoration function was based on a need to direct expertise of existing restoration staff to a central service unit and to address the critical need for professional conservation expertise for the collection in general. The restoration group responds primarily toward programme needs as well as projects which require the specific preservation of an artifacts function. Restoration technicians include mechanics, woodworkers, electricians and machinists. Conservation technicians include specialists in woods, metals, paper and so on. The two groups serve different roles in their response to the scientific and technical needs of artifact treatment, however, these roles are complimentary, each sharing specific knowledge, skills and the common goal of preservation.

The development of a conservation policy and procedures had three aims: preservation; leadership; definition of roles. Originally based on traditional conservation principles, the policy evolved to meet the specific needs of a science and technology

collection through the input of curatorial and programme staff as well as the comment of outside agencies. The result is a document which has provided and will continue to provide leadership to all museums with similar collection requirements. The introduction of the policy gives recognition to the requirements of conventional conservation work as well as those of a museum which may view selective artifact operation as a valid interpretation method.

> A comprehensive policy for the NMST must reflect both conventional conservation standards and the special attitude towards cultural properties which themselves may not be unique but which represent individual steps in the progress of science and technology.[11]

The restoration/conservation balance that in the 1970s was tipped toward restoration through lack of trained conservators and policy has in the 1980s been tipped more toward conservation; however, the need to preserve the form and function of an artifact through restoration is still recognized as a legitimate activity. While curators once exercised varying degrees of responsibility for such work, their role is now restricted to the provision of expertise to conservation/restoration technicians or to the chief of conservation as required. The number of exhibits for which conserved artifacts are required becomes a function of broader organizational priorities and therefore more irregular.

Based on the need to temper the use of artifacts based on conservation policy requirements and the desire to avoid their exploitation through improper marketing initiatives, the curatorial and conservation divisions have created a policy which governs use of artifacts outside the museum. It recognizes the institutional mandate and organizational philosophy regarding accessability of collection to the Canadian public yet seeks to maintain the integrity of the museum and its collections by ensuring that such access is not based solely on revenue generation for the museum or borrower and that artifact use is consistent with the mandate, mission and objective of the museum. By this document curators have attempted to retain direct responsibility for collections and their use.

The NMST estimates its present artifact holdings to be approximately 120,000 artifacts. The artifact purchase account is 100,000 dollars, a level which has not changed since 1967. This pales by comparison with the 908,000 dollar purchase account for the long-established, one million artifact collection of the Science Museum in London, England. Similarly, comparisons are also frequently made between the yearly purchase budgets of NMST and the other national museums. There is undoubtedly a greater cultural and market value placed on art than on technology; however, the increasing "collectability" of technological artifacts has increased competition for their acquisition by museums. Auction

houses such as Christie's and Philips deal extensively in the kinds of early developmental technology which the museum requires as "representative" artifacts (early transportation, communications, medical and scientific test apparatus are examples). Here the museum is generally out of competition with the more affluent museums and private collectors.

Acquisition costs for technological artifacts frequently include very significant removal costs. The costs of removal, crating and shipping, which in some instances include the rental of a crane, have amounted to one-quarter of the acquisition budget for one artifact.

The potential for an exponential rise in the number of artifacts collected by the museum is a function of its mandate and the "accelerating pace of technological development." Apart from an attempt by curators to "catch up" on the preservation of the nation's scientific and technological heritage since 1967, there remains the necessity to keep pace with new technology in all fields in order to meet the museum's strategic objectives. Presently increasing at a rate of 1,000 artifacts per year (in 1987 this rate was doubled) the collections are exerting pressure on already inadequate storage and conservation resources. The size and complexity of construction materials of technological artifacts create unique problems for the museum which require innovative solutions.

The recognition that the museum cannot fully respond to its collections mandate in all technologies has resulted in the development of partnerships with other collecting institutions with complementary mandates. Research, acquisition and storage requirements have been shared with such groups as the Canadian Railway Museum and the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum in order to ensure optimum preservation of the nation's physical and intellectual heritage in two important technologies and their eventual interpretation through exhibit and publications. Curators of both partner institutions have acted in concert to acquire artifacts. For the NMST, the preservation of technology without the responsibility for its storage is obviously advantageous.

The transfer of significant collections from government departments and agencies has continued. The acquisition by the museum of the collection of meteorological apparatus from Atmospheric Environment Service, Environment Canada, is a case in point. There is, however, a trend toward curators negotiating partnership agreements with such agencies in order to commit both institutions to historical research, collections development, provision of access through loans and shared responsibility for the development of exhibits.

The creation of satellite museums or exhibit centres and disposition of artifacts relate to partnership agreements but are also independent initiatives.

The "devolution" of the NMST has been considered in several ways. The creation of satellite museums based on specific technologies or curatorial areas is one concept. The most ambitious plan envisages separate exhibit centres based on curatorial groupings of technologies (communications, energy, physical sciences, industry and so forth) located on the islands below the Chaudiere Falls on the Ottawa River as well as on land on Brewery Creek in Hull, Quebec for storage of artifacts.

This concept is also envisaged for application at the Central Experimental Farm with the proposed expansion of the Agriculture Museum on that site and development of a "living historical farm" as well as access to current research and development work being done by Agriculture Canada.

Further application of a devolved museum would see satellite museums or exhibit centres and specific collections in locations across the country. Curatorial staff would be assigned to these modules during the formative stages; however, the on-going relationship of the curator to the collection and exhibit subsequent to that is uncertain.

Disposition has become the collections "buzz-word" for the '80s. At the NMST, the removal of artifacts from the collection has, as a policy, been slow; however, in a museum that as part of its mandate acquires representative technology to trace development and where provenance is not always the prime acquisition rationale, the "upgrading" of collections is possible and desirable. Disposition is also being considered in light of proposed reduction in the number of technologies to be addressed by the museum. In this case, artifacts could be transferred to partner museums specializing in specific technologies. This may apply particularly to such groups of artifacts as ship models, which with some exceptions might find more affinity in a maritime museum. Less attractive methods of disposition include public auction and destruction.

The act of artifact disposition is one which will greatly affect the duties of the curator. Some of the more cynical have suggested that employee appraisal in the future may be based not on the number and quality of artifacts acquired in a year but on the number disposed of.

The basic custodial responsibility of curators for artifacts entrusted to the museum by donors and vendors is not taken lightly. The process for deaccessioning an artifact will include a

professionally considered justification as well as notification, if possible, of the artifact's original owner.

The need for a well considered programme of curatorial research in order to plan and implement an acquisition programme as well as to ensure full documentation of collections is a museum priority. As discussed earlier, the initial role for curators precluded realization of such a plan. Research based on public inquiries as well as requests from other museums was given first priority; however, some curatorially inspired or conducted projects have resulted in significant contributions to the field of material culture research. The production of a machine-readable inventory of Canadian agricultural equipment advertising (1847 to 1942) is a valuable resource tool for researchers, curators and exhibit designers. The publication New Voyageurs-- Canada in Space is a research document which has both generated acquisition of significant Canadian space technology and documented existing museum collections in this field. This will provide public access to the story of Canadian achievement in a technology so vital to communications in this country. The development of computer technology in Canada was documented through an extensive oral history programme, the results of which have become a unique research resource.

The restructuring of curatorial duties, expertise and qualifications as the museum begins its search for additional curators will almost certainly result in a different perspective on curatorial research. The post-graduate or doctorate historian will have a different, broader focus than the former curators, whose expertise was subject and artifact specific. There is undoubtedly a middle road between the writing of museum pamphlets for the general public and scholarly publishing for a narrower academic or professional audience.

The scope and varying focus of research required within the science and technology community is reflected in the museum's decision to establish a research function which is in one sense independent from curatorial pursuits yet maintains a functional relationship to it. The focus of curatorial research is planned to be collections and subject specific. It can be guided by the broader research into the history of Canadian science and technology conducted by a research section. The two are interdependent and their products synergetic.

The establishment of a radically new combination of science museum/science centre in 1967, and the lack of an appropriate curatorial function needed in response to it, resulted in the creation of a unit which was geared toward a high level of public service with a minimum of resources. The thwarted development of the museum in general and the collections group in particular did not allow for the evolution of museological functions tailored to

the specific requirements of a museum of science and technology. The redirection of curatorial activity to the more proscribed functions of research, publication and collection development, as planned for the museums "second generation" curators, will provide different outputs. The emphasis on academic qualifications rather than a blend of expertise and scholarship in the selection of curators may result in a reduction in preservation of technological function representing as it does a shift from the curator of technology to the curator of the history of technology. With no tradition, no continuity within the curatorial division, there could be a loss of support for the interpretation of artifacts through exhibits. This "threat" is particularly real in an institution which must balance its science centre approach to explaining new science, as centralized within the museum's education/dissemination function, with its duty to make heritage collection accessible to the public.

It is not possible to predict the effect that political and internal administrative initiatives will have on the museum or museological functions. Future plans for curatorial activity at the NMST will be part of the new role for the museum in general. Issues relating to the museum's relationship to government, both in terms of funding and its desire to be a key player in selling various departmental policies, will have an impact on collection development and exhibit planning. The shifting priorities of the museum to reconcile its needs with that of industry or to react to new technological developments will similarly affect the curatorial role.

Changes in the museum's organizational structure and the development of curatorial hierarchies will both increase the management function of senior curators and provide lower level support for collections development activities; however, other changes are more critical. The development of modular collections and exhibit facilities may affect the curator's relationship to science and technology within what was, but may not continue to be, a general technology museum. Increased partnerships could result in the curator acting more as a facilitator than a "doer." Shifting organizational objectives could have a tremendous impact on both acquisition and disposition of collections.

The one certainty for curators at the NMST is that the "flagship" is changing direction, that the curatorial function of its first two decades has served its purpose and that the next "generation" of curators will be forced to react to a very different environment.

---

1. Carol Phillips, "Missing in Action," Muse 3(3): p. 2.

2. "Being a curator is the most impossible profession on earth!" Muse 3(4): pp. 15-18.

3. The statement of purpose says, "... to demonstrate the products of nature and the works of man with special but not exclusive reference to Canada, to promote interest therein and to disseminate knowledge thereof throughout Canada." RSC 1970 c.12, s.1, National Museums Act 1967-1968.

4. National Museums Corporation, Program Forecast 1970-71.

5. "A Vital Museum of Science and Technology" (Report to the Board of Trustees, National Museum of Science and Technology, Ottawa, 1971).

6. D.M. Baird, "The National Museum of Science and Technology," Science Affairs 5(4).

7. Public Service Commission, Competition No. 67-2153.

8. National Museum of Science and Technology, Strategic Plan.

9. Ibid.

10. National Museum of Science and Technology, Communications and Space Business Plan, June 1987.

11. National Museum of Science and Technology, Conservation Policy, March 1987.

Section Four:

COMMENTARY

THE VIEW FROM THE MUSEUM COMMUNITY

William J. Withrow
Director, Art Gallery of Ontario

Coincident with my starting to think about this evening's talk, a communication from the Canadian Museums Association arrived on my desk in the form of an Advocacy Alert. It concerned the Federal Government's review of museum policy and it listed some of the questions presently under review in yet another nation-wide consultation process. For example, what should the role of the Federal Government be in supporting museums across Canada? What should the relationship be between the Federal and Provincial governments? What should be the role of the four national museums outside of Ottawa? Should there be more emphasis on travelling exhibitions in the future? Should all federal museums services and programmes be subject to peer review? And so forth.

To some of the recipients of this Advocacy Alert, these questions looked surprisingly like the questions in the National Museums Task Force Discussion Guide distributed in March of 1986--a document that many felt to have been an effective way of starting the extensive consultations to the Task Force charged with examining federal policy concerning museums.

For the record I would like to emphasize that long before the Honourable Marcel Masse initiated the Task Force on National Museums on January 30, 1986, the National Museums of Canada (that is, the Corporation itself, NMC) demonstrated an awareness of the uneasiness and concern felt by the museum community about many of these questions, and, more specifically, how the NMC might better respond to its mandate. For example, the Corporation had for many years been holding regular discussions on many of these vexatious problems with the directors of the Associate Museums of the National Museum Policy (some 20 chief executive officers of the leading institutions across the country which had been designated as "associates" under the Pelletier policy of democratization and decentralization). At the same time, NMC senior officials were attempting to consult about certain of these questions of policy with their counterparts, or the nearest equivalents they could find, in each province. Finally, deciding wisely that this process was perhaps too ingrown and much too involved with questions of turf and vested interest, they widened the consultative process and attempted to objectify it by sponsoring a series of "Search Conferences." For this enterprise, they engaged the assistance of the Niagara Institute. Three separate conferences were held in three different parts of the country and the list of participants ranged far beyond the museum profession in an effort to involve

representatives of all the elements of our society interested in museums, including lay people who were simply users. I have the impression that the majority of participants found the experience rewarding, if for no other reason than the opportunity of meeting people from other disciplines and from other parts of the country in a setting which permitted an unusual, free-ranging exchange of ideas. The general question for each conference was, "What should museums do for Canada over the next 10 years and how should they be organized to do it?" Not surprisingly, the document that emerged out of this process turned out to be rather abstract and general. To be fair, there were definite principles enunciated, but, to my mind, very few recommendations were made in the resulting publication, called Consultations 85: The Museum System in Canada. Few of these principles would be of much practical guidance to politicians and bureaucrats attempting to design legislation. But if the search conferences failed in that regard, they were gratefully received by the museum community as an important and symbolic gesture of openness and generosity on the part of the Corporation. The failure of the 120 representatives from business, government, artistic disciplines and various museum professions to solve specific problems did not deter the National Museums Corporation from pursuing their desire to refine and update the original National Museum Policy of 1972; and in January 1986 a set of nine guiding principles were proposed. The factors, in the view of the framers of these principles, were intended to be taken as mandatory considerations for the Federal Government in reviewing its roles and responsibilities in the area of museum-related heritage development in Canada. The nine principles were all logical, motherhood type statements such as "long-term benefits will be sought rather than short-term gains." What might have emerged from the process of consultation with the provinces and the museum community based on these principles will never be known, because Mr. Masse's Task Force was struck at this same time. The next official move on the part of the National Museums was to produce a book, called To Safeguard and Share the National Heritage: A Brief to the Task Force to Review the Role of the National Museums of Canada. In it the authors (and they are listed by name as the Board of Trustees) present their views, responding more or less to the themes of the Task Force Discussion Guide.

The Task Force designed the Discussion Guide so that very specific questions would naturally arise out of a few simple themes. The guide was divided into two main parts: part one focused on the four national museums and part two on non-federal museums. The theme for part one (A) was the role of the major federally owned museums; for part one (B), the theme was the appropriateness of the National Museums Act of 1968 and the effectiveness of the Corporation in its relation to the four national museums and the means whereby the four national museums can best carry out their roles. Part two (A) had as its theme the role and effectiveness of the Federal Government in supporting the

network of museums across the country through national programmes and, finally, part two (B) had as its theme the means whereby current or revised federal policy objectives relating to services beyond the four national museums may be most appropriately pursued.

In the late spring of 1986, the Task Force travelled coast to coast. It interviewed approximately 200 individuals and, during the same period, received over 75 briefs. Its original deadline for submission was June 1, 1986 but subsequently, Mr. Masse gave the Task Force one month's grace. Still, five months was too short, considering the complexity of the subject and the nature and geography of our country. The report was submitted officially on September 25 to the new Minister of Communications, The Honourable Flora MacDonald, and released to the public the following morning.

During the course of the work of the Task Force on the NMC, and particularly at the hearings before the Parliamentary Committee set up to review the report and receive delegations regarding its implications, the subject of the Smithsonian Institution was often raised. The point, of course, was, "Here is an example of a group of national museums under a centralized administration of high profile and international stature which is successful." In the minds of some who could not understand why the NMC was not working very well, the Washington example was an obvious model. But there were major differences: first of all in the way in which the two bodies were created. The Smithsonian was a result of a private bequest, not incidentally by a man of European roots. James Smithson was born in France, the illegitimate son of Sir Hugh Smithson, the first Duke of Northumberland, so it is logical that he would think in terms of centralized government. He bequeathed some money and his collection to the United States with rather vaguely stated purposes. Anyone familiar with the beginnings of the Smithsonian Institution will know that the United States government very reluctantly accepted the bequest and took an exceedingly long time to set up the Institution, which grew over the years into the vast organization we know today. The NMC was created under very different circumstances and for very different reasons. The National Museums of Canada was formed in 1968 and comprises, under a single administration, a corporate management, the National Gallery of Canada (including the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography), the Canadian Museum of Civilization (including the Canadian War Museum), the National Museum of Science and Technology (including the National Aviation Museum and the Agricultural Museum) and the National Museum of Natural Sciences, National Programmes and Corporate Services.

The telling difference between the two organizations for me, however, came through in interviews with senior officials at the NMC in Ottawa and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. The United States organization talked in typically American pragmatic fashion about "a menu of services" offered to the various museums

which are, to differing degrees of closeness, associated with the Smithsonian. The verbs that emerged in my interviews with those concerned on both the giving and receiving ends were "to help, to assist, to support and to facilitate" while in contrast, our Canadian officials used one word with great frequency and that was the word "control."

With regard to the role of headquarters, the Task Force asked a simple question: "What is wrong?" and after our survey of opinions, we answered that most people perceived the problem as "over-management by the museum corporation." The Secretary General, Leo Dorais, made a nice and to some extent valid distinction. He pointed out the problem was not "over-management," but "under management and over administration." It certainly might be argued that the admittedly heavy load of centralized administration made it very difficult for the managers to manage--whether they had the skills and inclination to do so or not.

When I was asked to be part of this series of lectures, it was made very clear to me that my main contribution should be in the area of presenting the view of the museum community. One has to grant the logic of such an assignment on the basis of my involvement in the Task Force, particularly in the interviews we had with Canadians concerned with museums from Victoria to St. John's.

The challenge in this is, of course, to say something beyond what time and space permitted in the printed report of the Task Force. This we presented in a chapter called "Points of View" which, without apology, I must declare to be a fair and extremely well honed précis of all the interview reports, briefs and letters.

What this précis does not spell out is that we did not set out with any preconceived notion; we had no thesis to test; we simply asked what respondents thought were the appropriate roles of the four federal museums; how they rated their performance; and, finally, what ideas they had as to why they perceived a gap or difference between the understood roles and the performance.

The views expressed and the attitudes held by the museum community reveal as much about the country as about the particular museums under review. I believe that the majority of people in most countries of the world who live <u>outside</u> their nation's capital city have conflicting attitudes toward that city--envy and pride being the most obvious. But I think it is fair to say that Canadians take this universal schizophrenia about our capital city of Ottawa to an extreme. The Task Force also found that this particular aspect of the review disclosed the highly regional nature of Canada.

As one might expect, the farther away from Ottawa, the less interest in what happened there, except for certain professionals whose work on national organizations such as the Canadian Museums Association gave them various kinds of insight and vested interest. Most people concerned with museums in the far east and the far west were not only detached, but in many cases simply disinterested. Ironically, but not surprisingly, the reverse generalization could be made about the interest of the Atlantic provinces, the Western provinces, and British Columbia in the Federal Government's Museum Assistance Programme (MAP).

As our Task Force made very clear, there was a very high degree of unanimity on the fact that the four museums in our capital must be the best. Various terms were used, such as flagships, shining examples, leaders, centres of excellence and so forth. For those people in the museum profession, especially those few who can remember the '50s and '60s, there was a harkening back to the good old days when one automatically turned to the three national museums (the fourth, the National Museum of Science and Technology, was not in operation until 1967) for advice and help and example setting in virtually every field of museology. Everyone bemoaned the fact that such was not the case any more, nor had it been for several years. The National Gallery came in for most of this particular kind of criticism.

At the same time, there was an almost equally unanimous feeling that these national showplaces in Ottawa should not be the "only act in town" or to be more accurate, "the only act in the country." There was resistance to the idea that there was any exclusive or especially advantaged position nationally or internationally for these Ottawa museums. For example, from Victoria to St. John's, there was agreement that individual museums outside of the national capital had every right to operate on the international stage. However, at the same time, it was felt that the National Museums had a special responsibility to represent Canada in such a way as to make all of its citizens proud and, on a practical level, to assist non-federal museums in negotiating international loans and contracts because of the special relationship to the Federal government enjoyed by the nationals.

In central Canada, as might be expected, there was more interest on everyone's part, regardless of professional or non-professional involvement, in the excellence of the national museums, and consequently more sympathy for the money being spent in Ottawa on the new buildings presently being constructed, and indeed on the need for proposed facilities for the remaining national museums which are at present so poorly housed. The reason for this is simple. People in central Canada have some notion that they might visit Ottawa and wish to see these institutions. For me there was only one surprise in the viewpoints expressed about the national museums and that was a quite general insistence that

they, especially the Museum of Civilization and the National Gallery, should in both their collections and exhibitions, reflect the regions--that is, be truly representative of all of Canada. For example, when someone from a Western province visits Ottawa, he or she expects the culture and achievements peculiar to her region to be represented in some way or other proportionately in the national museums. Further, the Westerner wants visitors from abroad who may come to Ottawa for business or government reasons to see in the national museums material which portrays the history, way of life and particular aesthetic view peculiar to the Prairies.

In summary then, everyone agreed that they wanted the national museums to be first-class but only first among equals. They really wanted these institutions to be partners on the same terms--lending and borrowing, organizing and offering exhibitions, and, very pointedly, accepting the exhibitions of sister institutions. These two wishes were not regarded by anyone as conflicting and I personally find them completely compatible.

Finally I should add that there was one expectation expressed by everyone across the country regardless of whether the respondent lived in Halifax, Vancouver or Montreal. It was perhaps an expectation that is, in view of the geography of this country, unrealistic; nevertheless, without exception, people complained that they rarely see anyone from the national museums in their area. Again, the National Gallery received the harshest criticism in this regard. It was felt by all the visual arts people that the National Gallery had really let down its side in not getting out into the country and visiting the regional galleries and, perhaps even more importantly, the commercial galleries and artist's studios. The vastness of the country as an excuse loses some credibility when one considers the peculiar coincidence that the two cities with the greatest concentration of collections (public and private), commercial galleries and artist studios are in Montreal and Toronto respectively--bracketing the capital with one-hour flights. Be that as it may, what it all adds up to is a nation-wide disappointment that the National Gallery was not fulfilling its mandate in terms of the living Canadian artist, as a result of its staff "hiding in their ivory towers in the Lorne Building." Perhaps unfairly, it was felt that the planning for the new building should not have interfered to the extent that it did with the national responsibilities. Indeed many felt that the National Gallery should have circulated a large part of its collection during the "close down" period.

With regard to the work of the NMC outside of Ottawa, which is generally known under the heading of National Programmes, there was much less agreement as to what should be done. I would go so far as to say that whereas there was unanimity across the country on the roles of the four national museums and on the assessment of their performance of those roles, there were almost as many

opinions as respondents on the suitability and effectiveness of the National Programmes. On this subject, the only thing that people seemed to agree on was that the museum community had grown dramatically in the last decade in size as well as professionalism and that this was, to quite a large extent, the result of the 14 years of assistance which had been offered by the Federal Government through the Museums Assistance Programmes. Because these programmes involved over a dozen different elements and served so many diverse institutions at dramatically different levels of sophistication, it was inevitable that the expectations and disappointments would be confusingly varied.

If one was forced to, certain very broad generalizations could be made. Unlike the attitudes toward the role of the four nationals in Ottawa, the attitudes toward the National Programmes depended much more on the size and frankly the economic health (I use that term rather than wealth for obvious reasons) of the institutions concerned. The larger and more mature museums wanted the Federal Government to offer them assistance with doing what they wanted to do and felt that they were best able to judge what they should be doing for their community. At the other end of the scale, most but not all of the smaller and newer institutions were more willing to take the assistance offered by the various federal programmes in the terms offered by the central authority. I am loath to go further than that, first of all because there is in the Task Force report a very good synthesis of the opinions gleaned about the National Programmes and it would be inappropriate and fruitless to try to further précis that section of the report in a talk. Second, I must repeat that the opinions we heard were so various and even at times conflicting that it is extremely difficult to present them in condensed form. One way, which is admittedly arbitrary, is to look at the recommendations of the Task Force, which of course involves some sort of assimilation of all the opinions.

Because of what we heard, the Task Force recommended that the present nine programmes known as MAP be phased out and be replaced with a new group of three, containing many of the same elements but delivered in a more flexible and responsive way--namely, a museum support programme (read: grants), an interprovincial and international exchange programme and a professional development programme. These were the three main thrusts which seemed to come through to us in our survey. There is no doubt that what is needed most of all is a simpler and more flexible system for the Federal Government to assist in the support of the museums outside of Ottawa. As the Task Force text reads:

> The reality facing museums differs from one region to another and even within regions. This new programme should be more generous to those provinces with small populations whose collective largesse is less than the

national average. Everyone agrees that no homogeneous programme can respond sensitively to such differences.

When the Task Force gathered in Ottawa in the late spring of 1986 to sort out its notes from the various interviews across the country regarding Museum Assistance Programmes, it was difficult to know where the least consensus lay among the workers in the museum community: the nature of the programme or how it should be administered. Suggestions as to where the MAP programme or its successor revised programme should be based were various. Some of the suggestions were as follows:

1) the Canada Council
2) a line department in Department of Communications
3) the Canadian Museums Association or a specially created department of it
4) the four nationals (in their new independent status) with, of course, each having those programmes which would be most pertinent to their disciplines
5) Heritage Council--somewhat like the now apparently shelved Applebaum-Hebert suggestion
6) a new kind of museum council patterned after the Canada Council.

About the only thing that everyone agreed on was that the administration of the Museum Assistance Programme should be separated from whatever administration or administrations might be put in place to run the four nationals.

The Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) was one of the most difficult programmes to fairly assess. Everyone agreed on its tremendous potential, but few have experienced tangible benefits. Indeed, relatively few institutions are at present a part of CHIN, but many are hoping to join. There is no doubt that CHIN has stimulated improved collections management systems across the country. The fact that registration in Canadian museums is more up-to-date than ever before is directly due to its existence. On the negative side was the immense expense; on the positive, the long-range benefits for better museums management and possibly improved and more efficient networking. Few showed any interest in the international networking potential and those who did were sceptical. To my mind, the problem with CHIN is the confusion (which is greater today than ever) as to its major thrust--that is, is it to be a national inventory, an instrument of international networking and a data bank of information on museum matters, or is it to serve individual museums in their more efficient collections management?

The problem of evaluating the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) was somewhat similar, exacerbated this time by the fact that its goals have changed several times during its existence. As we all know, it is now essentially a research centre in Ottawa doing

some conservation. Medium and small museums were bitterly disappointed when the decentralized concept collapsed and the regional labs were withdrawn. Another one of the many ironies of this situation centres on the increased awareness of the importance of conservation which the regional labs, and then more recently the mobile labs, brought about. Almost everyone agreed that the ideal situation would of course be that every museum of any size would have its own in-house conservation capability. Then the research could very well be centralized in one lab in Ottawa with the difficult and unique problem objects possibly being sent there when the local expertise was not sufficient. The degree to which CCI in Ottawa should attempt to cover or, if you wish, compete with the research centres in Europe and the United States was unresolved. Some thought that it could act as a conduit for information to Canadian museums from the world of the conservation community. Others felt that it should do its own research and publication. One thing was certain, the country's conservation needs far exceed the current capability and the current level of work being done.

As to CCI's appropriate reporting structure, there were many suggestions and no consensus. Some thought it should be transferred to the National Research Council; others felt that the Ottawa operation should be devolved to the four separate federal museums. A case was also made for investigating the possibility of combining the conservation units of CCI and Parks Canada. Finally, almost everyone agreed that the CCI should attempt to restart its Journal, which was sorely missed.

The mobile exhibits, or "Museumobiles" as they are known, were a sentimental favourite but everyone questioned their cost effectiveness and agreed that there must be a better way to reach the remote communities.

In retrospect, I think the Task Force did not perhaps give International Programmes enough consideration. It appears that the small- to medium-sized museums have found the service useful. Support for this programme from this particular group did not register with the Task Force as strongly as the severe criticism and lack of support which the larger institutions voiced.

Two themes dominated our interviews with both the directors of the National Exhibition Centres and their supporters. One, that the Federal Government retains a responsibility to fund the centres which, of course, were set up without sufficient provincial consultation, and second, that the centres should eventually become the responsibility of the provinces or the municipalities or both so that the federal funding might phase out while the local funding phased in. There is, of course, a tremendous difference in the nature and performance of these centres and it is impossible to make a general assessment.

One of the most popular and successful of the MAP programmes was the Upgrading and Equipment Assistance Programme. One of its aspects that was especially praised was the quality of the technical advice received.

Like the Specialized Museum Programme, the Special Activities Assistance Programme was little used and even less well known. Finally, the Training Assistance Programme was seen as a possible responsibility for the Canadian Museums Association if that organization could be funded to take it on. It was generally felt that more fully qualified instructors could be engaged for this work if it was unscheduled--that is, free of civil service restrictions--and could hire people as needed and on contract, and so forth.

As the Task Force records, the Associate Museums Programme is now past history and a whole new approach is needed to build a network of galleries that work together to serve Canadians, and this includes, everyone hopes, the museums in Ottawa and all those museums with the will and ability to do so, coast to coast.

Two more existing programmes within MAP which were highly supported by everyone were the Exhibition Assistance and Registration Assistance Programme. The Conservation Assistance Programme was also praised as being the main force behind the development of conservation laboratories within large museums. Finally on the subject of MAP programmes, there was strong interest in training, particularly in-service training. The problem with the present situation appears to be that people are unable to release staff members from their responsibilities and many shared with us their dream of a programme of some sort of sabbaticals for staff at various points in their careers with money for replacements. I would personally guess that, in the present economic climate, this dream will not be realized for some years.

In a publication mentioned earlier, named To Safeguard and Share the National Heritage, created by the National Museums of Canada in answer to the Task Force to Review the Role of the NMC, there is a section on the federal roles in culture and heritage. This is précised in a revealing paragraph which I'd like to quote. The NMC writes as follows:

> To summarize, uniquely federal roles are: guardianship of the unique national identity; representation of the Nation as a whole--internationally and inter-provincially; creation of balances through exchanges and sharing of resources, expertise, and information; the encouragement and promotion of standards and a regulatory role.

In contrast to this, let me quote the section on the mandate and objectives of the National Museums of Canada. They explain that in 1985, the Board of Trustees adopted a revised mandate as follows:

> to demonstrate and to assist others to demonstrate the products of nature and culture with particular but not exclusive reference to Canada so as to increase interest in and to disseminate knowledge of Canada's natural and cultural legacy for the enrichment of present and future generations.

The 1985 objectives go on to read:

> to collect, record, preserve and understand and to assist others to collect, record, preserve and understand the national heritage by developing, researching and maintaining collections of objects and information to communicate and to assist others to communicate ... and to obtain and manage the resources necessary to ensure that the collections are preserved and the main objectives of the corporation are obtained.

The contrast obviously lies in the tone and attitude of the former to the latter. In the mandate statement there is a very strong emphasis on "others" which I think we would all interpret as being, at least mainly, the non-federal museums across the nation. Everyone acknowledged that there always was a strong orientation towards the MAP programme and a real feeling of responsibility, on the part of headquarters at least, to make it work. But what was acknowledged as valuable assistance was at the same time resented as too dirigiste, too paternalistic and, above all, too bureaucratically complicated and rigid. It really does come down to a basic attitude. If I might be so bold, I'd like to suggest how the museum community would have written the précis I quoted from the NMC document on the subject of federal roles. I think they would have said it this way:

> To provide among all Canadian museums and galleries, coast to coast, a unique and necessary overview of national [or if you wish, federal] perspective; to provide strong leadership [but in no way exclusive rights] in representing Canada internationally; and finally, but most importantly, to participate as a peer in the Canadian museum community with regard to the sharing and exchange of information, artifacts and staff.

From some queries that I have heard from Ottawa in the last week, I gather that some work is being done to put together lists of possible candidates for the trustees of the new boards which will be responsible for the independent museums. I would like to

conclude with a comment about this matter. I believe that perhaps more than anything else, the museum community hopes that the government will put in place a trustee structure that will ensure that each museum gets a good, strong board. By this I mean that the individual board members are chosen for their intelligence, skills, record of community service and commitment-- and it goes without saying--for their special interest and knowledge in the discipline of the particular museum involved.

For those of us who have been fortunate enough to work with--and I say "with" advisedly (rather than "under")--good boards of trustees, we know the crucial importance of having this support system, this lobbying force and this resource of specialized business and private sector-type skills and knowledge.

Let us all make a very special effort to send the names of good potential trustees to the minister in the next few weeks.

LES MUSÉES AU QUÉBEC : UN POINT DE VUE

Jean Trudel
Programme de M.A. en muséologie, Université de Montréal

L'histoire des musées au Québec reste à écrire. Il existe bien, certes, le livre d'Archie F. Key, Beyond Four Walls[1], qui date de 1973, mais son plan est difficile à suivre et il n'est accompagné d'aucun appareil scientifique. Il y a aussi l'ouvrage en deux tomes de Guy Boulizon, Les musées du Québec[2], publié en 1976, mais il s'agit plutôt d'un inventaire descriptif d'où l'appareil scientifique est absent là aussi. Ces publications contiennent une foule de renseignements importants, mais ils doivent être vérifiés et il ne dégage aucune vision d'ensemble pertinente, ni dans un cas ni dans l'autre, de l'évolution des musées au Québec.

Il existe aussi quelques articles bien documentés, des historiques abrégés publiés par quelques musées et une publication récente, l'Histoire des sciences au Québec[3], aborde la question des musées au passage. La recherche sur le sujet reste à faire et elle est compliquée du fait qu'il n'existe aucun centre de documentation réunissant ce que nous en savons. Il y a bien des fonds de documentation au ministère des Affaires culturelles et à la Société des musées québécois, par exemple, mais personne ne s'est vraiment intéressé à réunir systématiquement tout ce qui pourrait se rapporter à l'histoire des musées au Québec. Les musées eux-mêmes, s'ils documentent scientifiquement et systématiquement les objets qui se trouvent dans leurs collections, n'accordent en général que très peu d'importance à la conservation et au classement des archives de l'institution. Et pourtant, il faudra bien un jour qu'on retrace l'histoire des musées au Québec pour mieux comprendre leur évolution et envisager leur futur.

Reliée aux grands objectifs culturels d'une société, l'histoire des musées en reflète l'évolution de la constitution d'une mémoire collective. Elle reflète aussi l'importance qu'une société accorde au futur et les valeurs sur lesquelles elle mise. Les musées ne peuvent exister sans le soutien du milieu dans lequel ils s'insèrent; en ce sens, même les projets qui ne sont jamais réalisés ou les musées qui meurent ont leur importance. Inutile de dire qu'il s'agit d'un sujet fort complexe.

Même s'il est très téméraire - compte-tenu de l'état des connaissances et de la documentation - de tenter de brosser dans ses grandes lignes une histoire des musées au Québec, nous allons tenter ici une approche qui nous permettra peut-être de mieux situer les développements récents du dossier des musées au Québec.

Des origines à 1842, origines signifiant l'arrivée des premiers colons européens au XVII[e] siècle, on pourrait croire qu'il n'y a pas eu de musées à proprement parler en Nouvelle-France et au Bas-Canada. Et pourtant, tout comme on considère que les temples de la Grèce antique et les cathédrales du Moyen Age font partie de l'histoire des musées occidentaux, on peut considérer les églises du Québec comme étant nos premiers musées.

Ces églises catholiques, dont les clochers ponctuaient le paysage des villes et des compagnes, étaient des institutions permanentes, sans but lucratif, au service de la société et de son développement qui faisaient l'acquisition d'oeuvres d'art religieux, les conservaient, les communiquaient et les exposaient à des fins d'études, d'éducation et de délectation, si on paraphrase presque textuellement la définition des musées donnée par le Conseil international des musées[4]. Ce n'était pas les témoins matériels en soi qu'elles contenaient qui étaient important, mais les valeurs que ces témoins matériels véhiculaient[5].

C'est donc la religion catholique qui a été à l'origine des premiers "musées" au Québec, qui étaient des musées d'art religieux. On commandait ou on importait les oeuvres destinées aux églises et les techniques d'éducation et d'animation auxquelles on avait recours étaient très contemporaines puisqu'on faisait appel à tous les sens des fidèles ou visiteurs au milieu de ce qu'un ajustement de vocabulaire nous permettrait d'appeler "des performances" requérant une participation interactive. L'analogie mériterait un développement plus prolongé.

De 1824 à 1860, on assiste à la création des premiers musées publics et à l'élaboration de projets de musées. C'est à Québec, en 1824, que Pierre Chasseur, sculpteur et doreur, ouvrit sa collection d'histoire naturelle au grand public[6]. On y retrouvait plus de trois cents animaux présentés de telle sorte qu'on puisse en connaître l'histoire et les habitudes. Des problèmes d'espace et de financement se posèrent très vite et, en 1836, malgré des subventions gouvernementales, Chasseur dut céder sa collection au gouvernement pour le montant de ses dettes. Le docteur et député Jean-Baptiste Meilleur (surintendant de l'éducation au Bas-Canada de 1842 à 1855) fut chargé d'installer cette collection, "commencement de musée provincial", dans le nouvel édifice du Parlement.

En 1841, après le déménagement du siège du gouvernement à Kingston, la Literary and Historical Society of Quebec (fondée en 1824) prend en charge la collection Chasseur et y ajoute ses propres collections de spécimens minéralogiques, géologiques et botanique pour former un musée important qui fut malheureusement détruit en 1854 par l'incendie de l'édifice de l'ancien Parlement.

C'était donc là tout à la fois le premier musée gouvernemental, le passage d'un cabinet de curiosités à un musée public et l'implication d'une société historique dans la gestion d'un musée, phénomène qui est encore actuel au Québec.

Mais ce n'était pas tout ce qui se passait à Québec pendant cette période. Le peintre Joseph Légaré, un ami de Pierre Chasseur, ouvrait lui aussi sa collection au public en 1833[7], une collection de peintures et de gravures. En 1838, il s'associait à l'avocat Thomas Amiot pour installer dans les étages supérieurs d'un édifice place du marché de la haute-ville, "La Galerie de Peinture de Québec". En 1852, trois ans avant sa mort, Légaré ouvrait une nouvelle galerie de peintures au public et publiait le catalogue de sa collection de tableaux. Il allait aussi appuyer l'ambitieux projet d'Institut Vattemare mis de l'avant en 1841 par le Français Alexandre Vattemare lors de son séjour à Québec[8].

Ce projet consistait à créer, au moyen de dons, un établissement comprenant "bibliothèque, cabinet d'histoire naturelle, musée d'arts, collection d'objets d'intérêt général, académie de dessin et de peinture, salle de lecture et cours publics, enfin tout ce qui peut aider au développement du génie, du goût et de l'intelligence". Malgré un comité prestigieux mis sur pied pour le réaliser, l'institut Vattemare ne vit pas le jour. En 1845[9], puis à nouveau en 1848 avec une proposition en six points fort bien articulée, des groupes de citoyens tentèrent de persuader les autorités de la cité de Québec de créer un "musée national" d'art, sans doute pour faire pendant aux collections scientifiques gérées par la Literary and Historical Society of Quebec. Mais un projet de musée d'art était, à cette époque, plus difficile à défendre qu'un projet de musée de sciences, et il n'eut pas de suite.

La ville de Montréal n'était pas en reste. C'est aussi en 1824 que Tommaso Delvecchio ouvre au public (jusqu'à sa mort en 1826) son "Cabinet de curiosités Naturelles et Artificielles" comprenant aussi bien des animaux naturalisés que des automates et des figures de cire[10].

Mais c'est la Natural Society of Montreal fondée à la même époque qui, la première, développa le volet "sciences des musées à Montréal[11]". Dès 1826, elle aurait diffusé une publication intitulée "Instruction for Preserving Objets of Natural History, respectfully addressed by the Natural History Society of Montreal to persons willing to assist its labours and add to the museum[12]". Son importante collection était ouverte au public en 1828 et servit à l'enseignement des sciences aux professeurs de l'Université McGill pendant de nombreuses années.

C'est cette société qui, avec la Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, demanda en 1841 la création de la Geological

Survey of Canada[13] constituée en 1842 sous la direction de William Edmund Logan et qui assembla ses collections à Montréal à partir de 1845, collections qui grandirent vite pour toucher la géologie et la minéralogie, puis d'autres secteurs des sciences naturelles. A partir des années 1850, il y avait donc un Musée national des sciences de grande envergure à Montréal, musée qui fut déménagé à Ottawa en 1880 - au désespoir des scientifiques montréalais - pour devenir l'embryon du Musée national du Canada (1927) dont les divisions comprenaient ce qui est aujourd'hui le Musée canadien des civilisations et le Musée national des sciences naturelles.

En 1847, un groupe de collectionneurs montréalais, auxquels sont associés les peintres Cornélius Krieghoff et William Sawyer, fonde la Montreal Society of Artists, une association vouée à la promotion des arts par le biais d'expositions temporaires[14]. Cette association s'incorpore en 1860 sous le nom de "Art Association of Montreal" pour "encourager les beaux-arts et établir et maintenir, autant que faire se pourra, un musée ou des musées d'art..." Elle allait devenir le Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal.

Pendant la période 1824-1860, ce sont les musées de sciences qui prennent racine au Québec et qui se développent. Ils reçoivent l'attention des gouvernements dans un pays nouveau, en voie de formation politique et d'identification de ses ressources naturelles. Les musées d'art restent à l'état embryonnaire ou à l'état de projets qui ne reçoivent pas d'appuis gouvernementaux et qui sont le fait de petits groupes d'artistes, de collectionneurs et d'érudits. L'intérêt pour l'histoire et le patrimoine est encore loin d'être évident.

De 1860 à 1950, les tendances qui étaient apparues se consolident et se précisent. A Montréal, afin de loger ses premières collections, l'Art Association of Montreal inaugure en 1879, square Phillips, ce que l'on considère comme le premier édifice construit pour être un musée au Canada (démoli en 1948)[15]. Elle déménagera dans un nouvel édifice rue Sherbrooke en 1912 et ses collections ne cesseront de s'enrichir par le moyen de dons de grande importance. Pour mieux correspondre à la réalité des collections, c'est en 1950 que ce musée prendra le nom de Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. Lié étroitement à la bourgeoisie anglophone de Montréal, il sera pendant toute cette période le seul musée d'art de cette ville.

En novembre 1931, le directeur du National Museum of Wales, Cyril Fox, séjournait à Montréal pour faire rapport sur l'état des musées de l'Université McGill[16]. Il examina alors seize musées et collections situés sur le campus de l'Université, dont quatre étaient ouverts au public le Redpath Museum, le McCord Museum, l'Ethnological Museum et le Library Museum. Les autres musées et collections servaient presque exclusivement à l'enseignement universitaire.

Inauguré en 1882, le Musée Redpath est toujours logé dans l'édifice construit, grâce à la générosité de Peter Redpath, pour abriter les collections de paléontologie de William Dawson, ce qui en fait un objet de musée en soi. Il contenait de plus des collections de minéralogie, de zoologie, de mollusques, d'entomologie, d'archéologie et d'ethnologie, collections qui allaient compenser pour le départ à Ottawa de celles de la Geological Survey of Canada en 1880. C'est là de plus que la plus grande partie des collections de la Natural History Society of Montreal aboutit lorsqu'elle ferma ses portes en 1925.

"The McCord National Museum" ouvrit ses portes sur le campus de l'Université McGill en 1922, après la donation en 1919 de la collection de David Ross McCord composée d'objets illustrant l'histoire et la vie sociale au Canada[17]. Le rapport Fox le décrit comme un musée d'histoire canadienne dont les collections touchaient aussi bien les Amérindiens et Inuits que les occupants d'origine européenne. En 1934, l'Université traversant une période de difficultés financières, le Musée McCord fut fermé au public jusqu'en 1971.

Le Library Museum était de formation récente en 1931; situé dans la bibliothèque de l'Université, il contenait une présentation permanente illustrant l'histoire de l'écriture et des livres depuis l'Égypte ainsi qu'une salle d'exposition temporaire. L'Ethnological Museum était logé quant à lui au rez-de-chaussée de la faculté de médecine. Il contenait du matériel ethnologique provenant du Musée Redpath et d'autres sources (aussi bien du matériel amérindien qu'égyptien) présenté selon des divisions géographiques.

Cyril Fox avait bien saisi le potentiel pour le public des quatre musées universitaires et des collections de recherche de McGill en recommandant une direction unifiée des musées universitaires. Ses recommandations auraient pu mener, éventuellement, au cheminement suivi à l'Université de Toronto au début du XX^{e} siècle pour créer le Royal Ontario Museum (Dickson 1986)[18]. Mais le contexte était différent.

Dans la dernière partie de ses recommandations qui portaient sur la coopération avec d'autres musées de Montréal[19], Fox consacre un long développement au Château de Ramezay. Ce musée, logé dans un édifice historique, avait été fondé en 1895 par la Société d'Archéologie et de Numismatique de Montréal[20], et le contenu de ses collections se rapprochait de celui du Musée McCord. "Montreal, commentait Fox, is a very large and wealthy city and ought to be able to support two Museums collecting historic objets and material, with the more ease in that one naturally attracts the interest and generosity of the French element of the population, the other that of the English[21]."

Sauf en ce qui concerne le Musée de l'église Notre-Dame ouvert en 1937 et contenant plus de 200 objets d'art religieux[22], la plupart des autres musées et collections de Montréal pendant cette période concernaient les sciences naturelles. Mentionnons, entre autres, le Jardin Botanique, fondé par le frère Marie-Victorin et ouvert en 1931, et le Musée commercial et industriel de l'École des Hautes Études Commerciales fondé en 1916 et qui possédait dans les années 1930 une salle des ressources naturelles du Québec[23].

Dans les musées rattachés aux institutions d'enseignement, on ne peut pas passer sous silence celui de l'Institution des sourds-muets, qui, ouvert en 1885[24], contenait en 1938 une collection de plus de 91 000 spécimens, dont 75 000 se rattachaient à l'entomologie et 9 000 à la philatélie[25]. Son conservateur, Florian V. Crête, un clerc de Saint-Viateur était un scientifique au courant de l'histoire des musées dans le monde et de leurs plus récents développements comme en fait foi un article de 1945 intitulé "Les musées et leur rôle en éducation[26]".

A Québec, dès l'obtention de sa Charte en 1852, l'Université Laval loge ses vastes collections d'enseignement (entre autres minéralogie et géologie) sur 50 000 pieds carrés de salles de présentation[27]. Mais ce n'est pas avant 1874, immédiatement après l'acquisition de la collection de peintures et gravures de Joseph Légaré, que le Musée du Séminaire de Québec est fondé et ouvert au public en 1875. Selon les journaux de l'époque, l'Université Laval "possède actuellement la première galerie de peinture et le plus beau musée dans le continent[28]". De 1880 à 1933, l'Université publiera 22 éditions du catalogue de ses collections et, au début du siècle, elle engagera un historien de l'art, J. Purves Carter, pour en faire l'identification de la partie artistique.

D'autre part, le gouvernement du Québec créait, en 1880, le Musée de l'instruction publique qui possédait des collections de botanique géologie, paléontologie, zoologie et numismatique[29]. C'est ce musée qui fit l'acquisition, en 1896, de la collection d'entomologie de l'abbé Léon Provancher, un scientifique qui fut le fondateur de la revue Le Naturaliste canadien[30]. Installé dans trois salles du Parlement de Québec en 1889, ce musée fut en quelque sorte fusionné en 1932 au Musée de la Province de Québec qui ouvrait ses portes en 1933 dans son édifice du Parc des Champs de Bataille[31].

Le Musée du Québec, en plus de loger les Archives du Québec, contenait alors des collections d'histoire naturelle, d'art, de numismatique et d'histoire[32]. Sa création avait mis longtemps à se concrétiser et faisait partie d'un courant de sensibilisation à la culture et aux arts tout autant qu'à la préservation du patrimoine québécois dont l'un des ardents défenseurs était le secrétaire de la Province (1919-1936), Athanase David. En 1922, le gouvernement du Québec adoptait trois lois qui allaient marquer un tournant en

ce sens, la Loi des monuments historiques et artistiques, la Loi créant les écoles des beaux-arts de Québec et Montréal et la Loi des musées de la Province de Québec[33]. En 1962, dans un tout autre contexte, les collections de sciences naturelles allaient quitter le Musée et être dispersées.

Pendant la période 1860-1950, beaucoup d'autres musées allaient voir le jour en dehors de Québec et de Montréal. Certains avaient été créés par des sociétés historiques comme le Brome County Historical Society Museum qui ouvrit ses portes en 1903 à Knowlton et qui existe toujours. Mais la majorité d'entre eux était rattachée à des maisons d'enseignement, comme le Musée du Séminaire de Sherbrooke fondé en 1875 ou le Musée du Séminaire de Joliette dont l'origine remonte au moins à 1890. Ces musées avaient tous comme dénominateur commun des collections de sciences naturelles. Un texte de Florian Crête nous en fournit l'explication:

> Aux débuts de la colonie, les communautés religieuses ont organisé de leur mieux l'enseignement scolaire. L'histoire naturelle était bien dans les programmes. Tous nos séminaires se sont montés un musée d'histoire naturelle. Mais les livres qui nous venaient de France ignoraient notre géologie, notre flore et notre faune. L'histoire naturelle fut négligée. Il s'agissait de remonter la côte mais ce fut dur. L'abbé Provancher, de vénérée mémoire, s'attela à la tâche avec une persévérance digne de tout éloge. Son travail gigantesque ouvrit la voie. Avec des hauts et des bas, le feu sacré ne s'éteignit jamais[34].

Lorsqu'en 1932 Henry A. Miers et S.F. Markham furent chargés par la Carnegie Corporation de New York de visiter les musées du Canada et de produire un rapport[35] - qui reste un document de base pour en comprendre l'évolution - ce fut à partir d'une liste préparée par Florian V. Crête qu'ils travaillèrent au Québec[36]. Sur 125 musées recensés au Canada, 37 se trouvaient en Ontario et 49 au Québec.

> In the Province of Quebec, by contrast, the greater number of museums owe their origin to religious institutions. Of the 49 museums in this province, no less than 22 are directly controlled by Catholic educational institutions. Most of the colleges and seminaries administered by religious orders in the province have a museum, which indicates a widespread appreciation of the value of museums as aids to education. At the same time, it must be admitted that the technical standard of these is not high, since the expenditure is nominal, the curatorship is honorary, and few of of the curators have any special qualifications for the work[37].

L'ensemble du rapport donne une vue claire, précise et sans complaisance de la situation des musées au Canada. Une des recommandations des auteurs concernait la coordination provinciale; elle allait mettre beaucoup de temps à prendre racine:

> It appears that some new organisation is required which would supply advice and assistance to the smaller museums and enable them to co-operate for the common goal. There can be no question under present conditions of a national board of control which might bring this about, for the museums are not supported by national funds.
> In this connexion, three significant facts may be noted (a) practically no assistance is at present given by the provincial government to non-provincial museums; (b) the provincial government is the only body which can hope to provide any such assistance on permanent lines; (c) such a system could only be worked out with the full approval of local museums. In view of these facts, it seems natural to suggest that the provincial authority is the proper body to undertake, at any rate, in the first instance, some scheme of co-ordination and co-operation[38].

En 1951, lors de la publication du rapport de la Commission Royale d'enquête sur le développement des Arts, des Lettres et des Sciences au Canada (Commission Massey), il était fait mention que la situation des musées n'avait pas beaucoup changée depuis 1932, et que les recommandations du rapport Miers/Markham n'avaient pas été suivies[39].
De 1950 à 1974, il se produisit des changements importants dans le dossier des musées au Québec. A la suite de la Commission Royale d'enquête sur l'enseignement dans la Province de Québec (Rapport Parent) au début des années 1960, tout le système d'éducation du Québec fut transformé et pris en charge, dans sa plus grande partie, par l'État. Une des conséquences directes de cette transformation en profondeur fut la mise au rancart, la dispersion, la dilapidation et même la destruction d'une bonne partie des collections des institutions d'enseignement de l'ancien système. Les nouveaux programmes n'incluaient pas leur utilisation à des fins d'enseignement et elles tombèrent dans l'oublie à un tel point que le Québec ne possède pas encore aujourd'hui de grands musées de sciences naturelles.

Par contre, la création en 1964 d'un ministère des Affaires culturelles allait donner un nouvel essor au volet "arts" de la muséologie québécoise. La Loi sur les musées de la province adoptée la même année spécifiait que le gouvernement pouvait établir "des musées pour servir à l'étude de l'histoire, des sciences et des beaux-arts[40]". Cette loi faisait passer le Musée du Québec sous l'autorité du ministre des Affaires culturelles et permettait la création à Montréal du Musée d'art contemporain qui ouvrit ses portes en 1965 au Château Dufresne.

En 1962, le Musée d'Art de Saint-Laurent était fondé par M. Gérard Lavallée qui allait lui consacrer vingt-cinq ans de sa vie. En 1965, le Musée militaire et maritime de Montréal (aujourd'hui Musée David M. Stewart) sur l'île Sainte-Hélène s'incorporait après des débuts modestes en 1955 sous la responsabilité de la Société historique du Lac Saint-Louis[41]. Il était l'oeuvre du plus grand mécène qu'aient connu les musées du Québec, M. David M. Stewart, dont la contribution au développement des musées québécois reste un jalon marquant de leur histoire. En 1965 aussi, le Musée ferroviaire canadien, un musée spécialisé, s'ouvrait au public à Saint-Constant près de Montréal.

Montréal se préparait à accueillir les visiteurs de l'Exposition universelle de 1967 pendant que partout au Québec on mettait à profit l'argent des projets destinés à fêter le Centenaire de la Confédération pour consolider le réseau de salles d'exposition et de musées[42]. Les retombées de l'année 1967 allaient être multiplées pour les musées du Québec et restent encore à analyser. En 1968, vingt-huit nouveaux complexes à caractère culturel et muséologique avaient été créés[43].

Fermé au public depuis 1934, le Musée McCord s'ouvrait à nouveau dans de nouveaux locaux rue Sherbrooke en 1971[44]. En 1972, le gouvernement du Québec adoptait la Loi sur le Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal qui lui donnait un statut semi-public, la corporation du Musée étant incapable d'assumer entièrement les coûts de l'institution à même le secteur privé[45]. Cette intervention du gouvernement, qui n'alla pas sans heurts, allait faire passer en dix ans le contrôle du musée de l'élite bourgeoise anglophone de Montréal à celui d'une nouvelle élite bourgeoise francophone. Créé en 1967, le Musée d'Art de Joliette, oeuvre du père Wilfrid Corbeil, inaugure un nouvel édifice au début de 1975[46].

De 1974 à nos jours, les choses s'accélèrent encore plus pour les musées du Québec qui ont acquis une grande visibilité et dont on parle pratiquement tous les jours dans les journaux. Pour mieux coordonner ses subventions aux musées privés, le ministère des Affaires culturelles crée en 1974 un Service des musées privés qui deviendra en 1977 la Direction des musées privés et centres d'exposition. On y comptera, en 1978, jusqu'à douze fonctionnaires administrant des programmes de subventions et de services au réseau des musées québécois. Démembrée en 1982, cette direction aura donné un dynamisme et des services au réseau que beaucoup regrettent encore. D'autre part, pour faire pendant aux actions du ministère dans le réseau, la "Quebec Museum's Association", fondée en 1958[47], se transforme en Société des musées québécois pour devenir, en 1977, l'interlocuteur privilégié du ministre des Affaires culturelles dans le dossier des musées.

En fait, depuis 1965, le Québec était agité par un grand débat sur la culture alimenté par un Livre blanc (1965) qui n'avait

jamais été rendu public, par le Rapport Rioux sur l'enseignement des arts au Québec (publié en 1968) qui n'eut jamais de suite, par le Rapport du Tribunal de la Culture (publié par la revue Liberté en 1975) et par le Rapport L'Allier, Pour l'évolution de la politique culturelle (publié en 1976) juste avant la prise du pouvoir par le Parti Québécois. Ce dernier ne fut pas en reste, publiant en 1978 La politique québécoise du développement culturel qui identifiait trois projets de grands musées à créer sous peu par le gouvernement : un Musée québécois de sciences naturelles, un Musée des arts et traditions populaires et un Musée des sciences et de la technologie[48].

De ces trois projets - qui correspondaient à des carences réelles du réseau des musées québécois - seul celui d'un Musée des sciences et de la technologie vint bien près de voir le jour. Pour y donner suite, un groupe de travail sur les musées scientifiques fut formé sous la présidence de Fernand Séguin et déposa son rapport en janvier 1980[49]. D'autres études furent réalisées et une loi votée en mai 1984 pour créer la Société de la Maison des sciences et des techniques[50]. Un conseil d'administration et un directeur furent nommés, du personnel engagé, mais en 1986 le gouvernement du Québec, qui avait d'autres priorités, renonça à poursuivre plus loin.

En 1977, une maquette du projet d'agrandissement du Musée du Québec (liant l'édifice du Musée à celui de la vieille prison de Québec) était dévoilée en grandes pompes. Au secteur "art" de ses collections, ce musée avait ajouté un secteur "ethnologie" en 1972, et le manque d'espace était devenu un problème chronique. En avril 1979, le programme muséologique du Musée du Québec, même parcimonieusement distribué, se mit à créer des remous autant à l'intérieur du Musée que dans tout le milieu[51]. Le concept du "musée de l'homme d'ici" était lancé. Un nouveau document fut publié en août et largement distribué[52]. Des audiences publiques eurent lieu à l'automne, à Montréal et à Québec où 37 mémoires furent présentés; un tel débat autour d'un musée ne s'était jamais vu au Québec. Au milieu du débat, un autre document, Musées et muséologie au Québec: nouvelles perspectives était diffusé, véhiculant cette fois le concept d'une "collection nationale" centralisée[53].

Dans la confusion qui s'ensuivit et devant l'impossibilité de réconcilier les tenants d'un musée d'art et les tenants d'un musée de l'homme, un jugement de Salomon fut émis : Québec aurait non pas un seul, mais deux musées. La mission du Musée du Québec fut réduite au volet "art" de ses collections et un nouveau projet de musée fut mis en chantier à Québec, celui du Musée de la civilisation. L'édifice sortit de terre plus rapidement que son concept d'utilisation qui est enfin précisé depuis l'été 1987 autour d'une équipe renouvelée.

L'Assemblée nationale du Québec adoptait à la fin de 1983 une nouvelle loi sur les musées, la Loi sur les musées nationaux qui transformait complètement le statut du Musée du Québec et du Musée d'Art contemporain de Montréal. Au lieu d'être rattachés directement au ministre des Affaires culturelles, ces deux musées devenaient en quelque sorte des sociétés d'État, des corporations mandataires du gouvernement dont les affaires sont administrées par des conseils d'administration. La loi fut modifiée en 1985 pour inclure le Musée de la civilisation. Les musées d'État prenaient ainsi une certaine distance par rapport à l'intervention directe des fonctionnaires et politiciens dans leur gestion, et surtout une autonomie de fonctionnement qui leur avait fait défaut jusqu'alors.

Pendant ce temps, d'autres musées naissaient, comme le Musée du Bas-Saint-Laurent à Rivière-du-Loup en 1975 et le Musée de la Gaspésie à Gaspé en 1977. Le Musée du Séminaire de Québec était relocalisé en 1983 dans un ancien édifice recyclé à cet effet et le Musée de Sept-îles emménageait dans un nouvel édifice en 1987. Mais c'est la création de l'Écomusée de la Haute-Beauce, Musée Territoire, en 1979 à Saint-Évariste[54], qui allait avoir le plus d'influence sur la muséologie au Québec en introduisant le concept de "nouvelle muséologie[55]".

Aujourd'hui, en 1988, les nouveaux projets sont plus nombreux que jamais. Qu'on en juge par cette liste succincte des projets en cours:

A Québec:

1- Le Musée de la Civilisation ouvrira ses portes à l'automne 1988 dans un édifice qui aura coûté plus de trente millions[56]. Son nouveau directeur estime son budget de fonctionnement à vingt millions annuellement[57].

2- Le Musée du Québec voit son projet d'agrandissement enfin prendre forme au coût de vingt et un millions. La fin des travaux est prévue pour 1990[58].

A Montréal:

3- Le Musée d'Art contemporain de Montréal, logé Cité du Havre dans un pavillon "temporaire" d'Expo '67, voit ses projets de relocalisation se concrétiser au coût de trente millions et prévoit l'ouverture de son nouvel édifice pour 1990[59].

4- Le Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal s'agrandit au coût de soixante millions et prévoit la fin des travaux pour 1991[60].

5- Le Centre Canadien d'Architecture, fondé à Montréal en 1979 par M^{me} Phyllis Lambert et doté de collections de première importance, prévoit ouvrir ses portes au public en 1989. L'édifice aura coûté près de quarante millions[61].

6- Le Musée McCord recevait en 1987 un don de vingt millions de la Fondation McConnell, ce qui lui permettra de doubler sa superficie d'ici 1992[62].

A Trois-Rivières:

7- La Corporation du Musée de la tradition et de l'évolution envisage un projet de construction de vingt-deux millions pour

loger ses collections d'ethnologie (collection Robert-Lionel-Séguin), d'archéologie et de sciences naturelles[63].

A ces développements qui sont presque tous en voie de se concrétiser, il faudrait ajouter une autre liste de ceux qui sont à des étapes moins avancées! Il n'existe actuellement aucun plan directeur de développement du réseau des musées québécois qui soit connu. Avec toutes les constructions en cours ou à la veille d'être entreprises, il faut bien constater que ce sont les grands musées qui sont favorisés et qui réclameront au ministère des Affaires culturelles dans un avenir prochain les augmentations de budgets de fonctionnement nécessaires pour un niveau plus élevé d'activités.

En novembre 1974, le ministre des Affaires culturelles subventionnait vingt-huit musées et centres d'exposition. En 1987, la liste comprenait 55 organismes dont 37 musées (y compris deux musées en voie d'accréditation). Les trois "musées d'État" ne font pas partie de cette liste ni le Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal (considéré comme hors-norme) qui recevait à lui seul une subvention de fonctionnement de plus de trois millions. Les centres d'exposition se partageaient un peu plus de sept cent mille dollars, tandis que les autres musées se partageaient près de trois millions, une somme qui leur permettaient à peine de survivre. A moins d'un réajustement considérable du budget du ministère des Affaires culturelles, on peut se demander à ce moment-ci quelles seront les répercussions des nouveaux projets sur l'ensemble du réseau des musées québécois.

Comme on peut le constater, la situation des musées au Québec a évolué très rapidement depuis 1974, et cette évolution est loin d'être négative. C'est dans ce contexte que se tiendra à Québec en 1992 l'assemblée générale du Conseil international des musées (ICOM) et l'effervescence du milieu des musées québécois n'est pas près de s'atténuer.

Si les Programmes d'appui aux musées du ministère des Communications d'Ottawa sont essentiels à plus d'un titre au milieu muséologique québécois, les développements récents concernant les quatre grands musées fédéraux semblent plus lointains, même s'ils sont observés avec curiosité. Ces musées ne sont plus considérés comme des modèles, comme ils l'étaient par les muséologues québécois dans les années 1960 et 1970. L'état de la muséologie a changé au Québec et les échanges ne pourront plus se faire à sens unique.

---

1. Archie F. Key, Beyond Four Walls: The Origin and Development of Canadian Museums.

2.Guy Boulizon, Les musées du Québec Montréal, Fides, 1976. Tome I: Montréal et l'ouest du Québec. Tome II: La vieille capitale et l'est du Québec.

3. Luc Chartrand, Raymond Duchesne et Yves Gingras, Histoire des sciences au Québec. Montréal, Les Editions du Boréal, 1987.

4. Conseil international des musées (ICOM), Statuts, Code déontologie professionnelle. Paris, ICOM, Maison de l'UNESCO, 1987, p. 3.

5. Curieusement, cette définition modifiée se rapproche de celle que le Musée de la civilisation (à Québec) adoptait en juin 1987 en page 9 du document Le Musée de la civilisation: un monde en continuité et en devenir, Québec, 3 juin 1987.

> Alors que beaucoup de musées placent l'objet au centre de leurs préoccupations le Musée de la civilisation, lui, y place la personne humaine. Les objets, tout importants qui'ils soient, y prennent place en raison de leur signification et de leur utilisation. Ils y sont avant tout des témoins de l'activité humaine. Ils sont donc replacés dans leur contexte et ils sont présentés de façon aussi vivante que possible.

6. Chartrand et.al. op.cit. pp. 87-91 et Key op.cit. p. 109. Voir aussi John R. Porter, "Un projet de musée national à l'époque du peintre Joseph Légaré (1833-1835)" dans Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française, vol.31, no. 1, juin 1977, pp. 75-76.

7. Porter, op.cit. p. 76; John R. Porter, Nicole Cloutier et Jean Trudel, Joseph Légaré 1795-1855, Ottawa: Galerie nationale du Canada, 1978, pp. 14-15.

8. Porter, op.cit. pp.77-78.

9. Ibid. pp.78-81.

10. Key, op.cit. p. 109; Chartrand et al. op.cit., p. 91.

11. Chartrand et al. op.cit., pp.91-92.

12. Key, op.cit. p. 110.

13. Ibid, pp.122-126

14. Voir Pierre Leduc, Les origines et de développement de l'Art Association de Montréal (1860-1912), mémoire de maitrise, Université de Montréal, 1963.

15. Rosalind M. Pepall, Construction d'un musée Beaux-Arts, Montréal 1912. Montréal, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, 1986.

16. Cyril Fox, A Survey of McGill University Museums, Montréal, McGill University, 1932.

17. Louise Grenier, Le Musée McCord: histoire d'un musée universitaire, travail de session pour le cours "Histoire et fonctions des musées" dans le cadre de la maitrise en muséologie, Université de Montréal, 1987.

18. Lovat Dickson, The Museum Makers. The Story of the Royal Ontario Museum. Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum, 1986.

19. Fox, op.cit. pp. 36-38

20. Boulizon, op.cit. Tome I, pp. 47-52.

21. Fox, op.cit. p. 37.

22. Boulizon, op.cit. Tome I, pp.59-63.

23. Oscar Drouin, ministre, Bibliothèques et Musées 1938, Quebec, Rédempti Paradis, Bureau des statistiques, ministères des Affaires municipales, de l'Industrie et du Commerce, 1941, pp. 42-43; Marie-Carole Daigle, Le Musée du Commerce et de l'Industrie de Montréal 1916-1956, dans Musées, vol. 9, no. 2, été 1986, p. 10.

24. Key, op.cit. p. 1113.

25. Drouin, op.cit. pp. 54-55.

26. Florian V. Crête, Les musées et leur rôle en éducation. dans le Rapport Annuel de la Société Provancher d'Histoire Naturelle du Canada, 1945. pp.82-92.

27. Key, op.cit. p. 111.

28. Porter, op.cit. p. 82.

29. Key, op.cit. p. 109.

30. Le Musée du Québec, Québec, ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1979, pp.7-8. Voir Victor-Alphonse Huard, La vie et l'oeuvre de l'Abbé Provancher, Québec, Librairie J-P. Garneau, 1926. Lechanoine Huard était alors conservateur du Musée de l'instruction publique.

31. Voir Le Musée du Québec. op.cit.

32. Ibid.

33. Voir pour cette loi Raymond Montpetit, Du musée des connaisseurs à celui des spectateurs, dans Acts du colloque Musée et éducation: modèles didactique d'utilisation des musées, Montréal, Société des musées québécois, 1986, pp. 56-58.

34. Crête, op.cit. p. 90.

35. Henry A. Miers et S.F. Markham, A Report on the Museums of Canada, Edinburgh, T. and A. Constable Ltd. 1932.

36. Crête, op.cit. p. 90.

37. Miers et Markham, op.cit. p. 5.

38. Ibid, pp.60-61.

39. Key, op.cit. pp. 172-173.

40. Jean-Paul L'Allier, ministre, Pour l'évolution de la politique culturelle, Document de travail, Québec, ministére des Affaires culturelles, 1976, p.234.

41. Boulizon, op.cit. Tome I., pp. 89-93.

42. Key, op.cit. chapitre 24, pp.204-209.

43. Ibid, p. 207.

44. Key, op.cit. p. 212.

45. L'Allier, op.cit. pp. 252-254.

46. Jacques Toupin, Le Musée d'Art de Joliette, dans Muséo-Vision, vol. 2, no. 1, avril 1978, pp. 1-3.

47. Key, op. cit. p. 211.

48. La politique québécoise du développement culturel, Québec, Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1978, vol. 2, pp. 462-463.

49. Rapport final du groupe de travail sur les musées scientifiques, Québec, ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1980.

50. Jean-Claude Guédon, La Maison des sciences et des techniques de Montréal, dans Museum, no. 150, 1986, pp.133-136; Jean Claude La Haye, Une institution présente dans son milieu et ouverte sur le monde. La Maison des sciences et des techniques, dans Musées, vol. 9, no. 2, été 1986, pp.5-7

51. Le Musée du Québec et son avenir. Programme muséologique. Québec, ministère des Affaires culturelles, avril 1979.

52. Le Musée du Québec en devenir. Concept muséologique. Quebec, ministère des Affaires culturelles août 1979.

53. Musées et muséologie: nouvelles perspectives. Une hypothèse de travail du ministère des Affaires culturelles. Québec, ministère des Affaires culturelles, 1979.

54. Jean Trudel, Le réseau des musées de la Beauce., Société du patrimoine des beaucerons, janvier 1984.

55. La muséologie nouvelle, dossier thématique de Continuité no. 23, printemps 1984; Musées et nouvelle muséologie, numero thématique de Musées, vol. 8, printemps 1985.

56. Marc Tessier, "Les musées de demain" dans Continuité, no. 32\33, été\automne, 1986, pp. 47-50.

57. Angèle Dagenais, "Le Musée de la civilisation ouvre ses portes ce week-end" dans Le Devoir, 6 octobre 1987, p. 13.

58."Lise Bacon libère $21 millions pour le Musée du Québec" dans Le Devoir, 16 octobre 1987.

59. Angèle Dagenais, "Le nouveau Musée d'art contemporain coûtera $30 millions" dans Le Devoir, 13 avril 1987, p. 11.

60. Michel C. Auger, "Pour $60 millions le Musée des beaux-arts double sa superficie et respecte les édifices environnants" dans Le Devoir, 26 fevrier 1988 p. 3.

61. Jocelyne Lepage, "Un musée à la mesure de Phyllis Lambert" dans La Presse, 5 décembre 1987.

62. Angéle Dagenais, "Petit musée deviendra grand" dans Le Devoir, 21 novembre 1987.

63. "Les trifluviens réclament leur Musée de la tradition" dans Le Devoir, 2 mars 1988.

READING THE NATIONAL COLLECTIONS: MUSEUMS AS CULTURAL TEXTS

Jeanne Cannizzo
Research Associate, Royal Ontario Museum

I am afraid I am here under false pretences. When I was asked to take part in this series it was as someone outside of the museum world, an outsider to analyze the museum from an external, more public point of view. In the meantime I have undertaken to curate an exhibition of African objects for the Royal Ontario Museum and have been transformed into an insider. I hope that my few months at the ROM have nott so corrupted me that I cannot still offer you my analysis, generated through some 10 years of looking at museums from the outside, an analysis of museums as cultural texts--texts which can be read to reveal the world view which underlies them and thus influences and perhaps even determines the museums' form and content. I think this analysis of museums as cultural texts is particularly important when we are discussing the meaning of objects to the public.

To help you understand what I am talking about, let me give you an example, from a piece of fieldwork I did (I am an anthropologist) in British Columbia. I was asked to help the British Columbia Museums Association decide what sort of training was wanted and appropriate for the people who worked in many of the small local museums in the province. I found I could not make any meaningful recommendations until I understood these people's view of the past and their ideas about the purpose of the museum. Through talking with people and visiting their museums, a general picture of what I call a folk model of the past emerged, a model upon which their exhibitions were based.

The history I saw displayed there might be described as monolithic, static and very concrete. It is probably also better to think of it as the past and a very idealized one at that. It was basically about Anglo-Saxon culture with few indigenous or immigrant cultures represented. Occasionally, Indians were on display, but they were often put with the flora and the fauna of the province, shown alongside or even inside the natural history exhibitions. In a few museums Chinese artifacts were displayed, usually little medicine bottles, tiny shoes or ceremonial costumes. They were not put where the professional historian might show them, in the context of the Chinese labourers who worked on the railroads or in the mines; rather, these objects and the people they represent were shown as exotic oddities.

The past in these museums is also one without class hierarchy. Indeed we could say it was without religious diversity, ethnic tension or economic inequalities. It is also static. For the history is presented as a one-time thing, rather than part of a continuum or as part of an ongoing process. The actual period that the folk model covered began in 1890 or so and ended about 1920, a period which falls within the realm of living memory. We are dealing here with people's experience, or at least their idealized reconstruction of the lived experience. And that ideal life is exemplified by the pioneer, who is the subject of most of the folk models.

If we look at the historian's history of British Columbia, we often see references to company towns, timber and mining camps, and a very politically active, highly industrialized working class. And yet these are the same pioneers of the local museum. The explanation of this conundrum lies in what motivated those people in the small museum, and the content of their world view.

They wanted to "save a little glimpse of the past for the people of tomorrow" and "to make people aware of themselves and their past, to show people who they are." In other words, these local curators were offering a kind of constructed reality, an identity for what they saw as the "rootless, modern, urban creatures" who came through their doors.

The small community museums of British Columbia were the first I ever read as cultural texts to understand the underlying world view.

But the purpose and functioning of such creations, the folk models and the collections which embody them and the museums which enshrine them continue to interest me.

In our national museums we have the folk models, as it were, of the curatorial class and the bureaucrats.

What I am suggesting is just that our national museums, like any museum, are cultural artifacts in and of themselves, an expression of a world view, of the categories we use to divide up the universe, physical and cultural, while attempting to understand the world in which we have found ourselves. There is nothing natural about our museums, the collections they contain or the way in which those objects are presented to us, for museums are always fictional, that is, they are always created, or constructed by us, in a particular set of social and historical circumstances. I have, in fact, often described museums as negotiated realities. Here in our capital, the process of negotiation in cultural politics is fairly obvious in that we can often observe the hegemonic manoeuvring of government ministers and their chief civil

servants. But negotiation also goes on at a less obvious and frequently unarticulated level as well.

Prime Minister Trudeau, in announcing that money had been allocated for a new art gallery and new Museum of Man, said "We are providing new homes to two of our very important cultural institutions which preserve our past and guarantee our enlightenment in the future." But which past? whose enlightenment? and about what? For it is obvious that, if you think about it for a moment, a museum, even those we designate as national museums (or maybe particularly those chosen), cannot possibly acquire all the objects which make up a people's past, nor can a gallery display all the art forms found in our artistic heritage. Rather, these institutions present a selective art or social history, a particular past. For they cannot capture the whole of our material culture and national experience. This would be both physically impossible and imaginatively inconceivable, for reality is a sort of continuum which we break into usable, manageable categories, discarding or disregarding large segments in the process. And this is what I mean when I suggest that museums are themselves negotiated realities, carefully constructed and artificially created repositories. As such, by the way, museums are both expressive of world views and instrumental in molding these conceptions.

What, then, does a museum collection really represent? How has it come into being? What is there and what is not? What are the biases, if you will, in our national collections? I point out that there is, of course, no such think as an unbiased collectior, since all express some world view, ideology, aesthetic preference and so forth.

Some of these biases stem from the accidents of preservation. After all, thousands of Georgian silver spoons are still with us while simpler wooden ones are much harder to find. For a long time, too, those silver spoons were thought to be both prettier and more important. Earlier national collections reflect this preference and view. Now, in a changed political climate, a more democratic impulse prevails; no longer concerned with just big events and great men, we scurry about trying to find those wooden spoons. This populist approach is, of course, as much a product of a particular time and ideology as the older, elitist one.

Even if we move from arts to science we still have problems. The Museum of Science and Technology carefully warns us that "Finding exactly the right artifact involves a real detective story. ... Often the most difficult items to acquire are machines once used behind the scenes--telephone switching equipment, textile machines, machine tools--that tend to be scrapped when better technologies emerge."[1]

These biases might be relatively easy to see in reference to our own artifacts, but what if we move to less familiar cultures? Ethnological collections, including those at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, represent what Europeans, what white people, found interesting about the lives of the native peoples of this country. Thus, we might have plenty of moccasins, baskets and peace pipes but not a lot in between. And these items were often selected according to our taste--what we found the most beautiful, most repulsive or intriguing. These objects can never give a complete picture, a true reconstruction of another culture's collective reality or an individual's lived experience, although this is often the impression exhibitions leave with the visitor.[2] And it has been very common, until the recent past, that many objects are presented as "aboriginal," that is, as precontact, when in fact the items represent cultures operating, in some cases, after centuries of interaction with European societies.

Let me elaborate using an example from my current research, because the artifacts we use to represent the "ethnographic other" and the way we explain them reveals a lot about our own cultural selves.

So, to begin: what do you see, what mental image, when I say "Zulu"? Besides Michael Caine, I mean. You probably see an African warrior. This image is much older than the Michael Caine movie of course. Let me briefly untangle part of that history. In January 1879, the Governor of Cape Colony ordered a British invasion of Zululand after the King had refused an ultimatum which demanded the disbanding of the Zulu armies, a reform of their justice system so that it conformed to British ideals and the installation of a British resident in their capital.[3]

The British were afraid that the Zulus would launch a massive campaign, a "washing of the spears," and spark a generalized native uprising in South Africa. Their invasion force, however, met with a terrible disaster on the grassy plains of Isandhlwana when a 20,000 strong Zulu impi or army wiped out six British companies, killing some 900 Europeans and an uncounted number of their African allies. This defeat of white by black sent shock waves through the Empire. Historian James Morris, in his trilogy on that empire, writes,

> most of the British soldiers had never seen Zulu fighting men before and the experience was nightmarish. They were like people from another world. They wore ear-flaps of green monkey-skin, otterskin headbands, high ostrich plumes. ... They moved at a horrible changeless trot, rattling their assegais against their shields, hissing between their teeth.[4]

It is no wonder that so many soldiers who fought in the Zulu wars (the last was in 1906) brought home trophies to celebrate their survival and eventual victory. These artifacts of course promote a powerful image of the Zulu as warriors. And indeed that ethos was an important part of their self-identity. But through such collections, by their sheer numbers and limited typologies, we have come to see the Zulu only from this standpoint, a view generated on a long-ago battlefield. It is one which does not show us the Zulu in their other modes: as herdsmen, agriculturalists, in their homes and with their families. Museum collections, in their partiality, create certain cultural stereotypes which enter our own mythology about African peoples.

It might interest you to know, by the way, that when the Geological Survey undertook in the mid-19th century to describe the Canadian environment and resources, its scientists collected not only specimens of minerals and types of timber, but also human artifacts, cultural objects produced by the native peoples of the areas in which they were surveying. This brings me, I hope, to the biases in our Natural Sciences collections: What are the negotiated realities here? Let us take a look at one of their standard publications, The Mammals of Canada, published by the National Museum of Natural Sciences in 1974. It covers 196 species of recent mammals know to occur in Canada or its coastal waters within historical time. It is meant to be both comprehensive and popular. Well, there are only wild animals in this volume, the mammals with which the first peoples were familiar. But it does not include all the domesticated animals--the cows, pigs, sheep, goats--upon which the settlers and the pioneers depended. If not when this book started, in 1923, then certainly by the time it was published, the majority of Canadians were actually urban dwellers whose mammalian companions are now mostly the family pet. But we look in vain, in the Mammals of Canada, for "Morris" beside assorted mountain lions, lynx and bobcats.

That is a very faint and hurried outline of some of the more obvious biases in our national collections. Now I want you to think of this huge body of wonderful objects as the coloured pieces of glass at the bottom of a kaleidoscope. We have already seen some of the patterns they can make, and if we just shift our kaleidoscope a half turn we might come up with a new set.

In thinking about how we might negotiate some new realities for our national collections, I have been guided by you, the public, and by my own experiences in public broadcasting, as a university professor, as a volunteer in an art gallery and, of course, as a museum goer myself. I have found that people seem to be most responsive when topics and objects are presented in a holistic manner, historically grounded and often comparatively based. This is not to imply that our museums do not on occasion present exhibitions that are all of these things; but as our

information systems become more specialized and our data bases burgeon, we have tended to compartmentalize our knowledge and understanding of events and present them in fragmented ways. Let me give you an obvious example, one for the National Museum of Natural Sciences. What happens if we turn the kaleidoscope just a fraction and ask what do Raffi Armenian, Canadian composer, and nineteenth century American author Herman Melville have in common? Well, the only thing I can think of is whales--Baby Beluga and Moby Dick.

Moby Dick was the great white whale, in fact a sperm whale, of the type hunted between 1800 and 1850 after the exhaustion of several other species. The Beluga has long been hunted by the Inuit who use its "leather" for their clothing and umiaks, or skin boats. It has also been hunted commercially for use as feed on Prairie mink farms. I would like an exhibition which allows us to see not only the different species of whales, those that are endangered and those that are not, but also the whaling industry and its changing technology--for example, how the replacement of sail with steam allowed the speedier whales to be hunted; or in the 1930s, the introduction of the hollow lance shaft which forces compressed air into the whale's carcass to keep it afloat. After the Second World War, sonar was put to use in antarctic waters for detecting whales, and now more sophisticated audio equipment means we can discover much more about the directionality of the whales' own emission fields, compare individual signals and understand how they locate objects. Recent advances in photography allow us to watch killer whales, for example, over extended periods of time in their natural environment and to see their interactions in the pod. I want to see these latest research tools and to understand how and why that research is conducted.

And in our Natural Science gallery, let us hear both the eerie songs of the humpback whale and the human music it has inspired. While in the intersection between nature and culture, let us stage a performance--a reading of that famous scene between Captain Ahab and Moby Dick, and a dramatization of some of the Northwest Coast Indian mythology about killer whales. And we should see the rich cultural inventory linking the peoples of the Arctic and the Northwest Coast to the whale.

Since whales are intricately involved in human economic life and cultural activities, the public programming for our hypothetical show could provide a high profile forum on the current state of the international law of the sea, on whaling treaties, on the actions of environmentalists like Greenpeace and Inuit hunters' protest groups.

If your taste lies more in the plant line, how about, in a natural science museum, a serious look at another culture's pharmacopoeia which accompany it in use. Such an exhibition would,

through its display and interpretation of plant material, reveal how another society, with a different world view, divides up the natural universe, what characteristics they use to distinguish between one species and another.

Since many of these classifications are linked to the treatment of disease, this show would be framed by an examination of a therapeutic system based on something other than Western concepts of the body, of health and sickness. In doing so, we would learn about philosophical concepts such as the nature of misfortune, and witchcraft as a theory of causation.

As an example, in Central Africa, in what is now Zambia, the Ndembu people use some 40 plants and shrubs in the treatment of illnesses as varied as leprosy, dysentery, epilepsy and gonorrhoea. For the Ndembu, disease is not only a private disaster but also a public affair, since there is often a social explanation for the illness. Sometimes it is the result of ancestral shades or ghosts who punish their descendants for neglecting them; or an illness may be caused by a witch. Leprosy, for example, results from a transgression of one of the taboos of the boys' circumcision ceremony. Dysentery, thought to have been introduced by Europeans, is sometimes associated with witchcraft and spirit possession. Both are treated by Ndembu doctors drawing upon their pharmacopoeia which represents not only a natural classification system, but a whole "forest of symbols."[5]

But let us leave that particular part of the forest and go over to Science and Technology. Just for fun, could we see, here, non-human tool use: chimps and their termiting sticks, their leaf sponges for gathering drinking water and opportunistic use of branches as ladders? Or the Egyptian vultures who break ostrich eggs with stones and the sea otters who also put stones to use, by smashing shellfish on their stomachs, using a stone as an anvil. And then we could go on to a rather serious discussion of what differentiates human tools and tool use from such animal activities.

This leads me to something I think is too rarely seen in science and technology museums. While we are often given the historical development of a particular tool or technology, we rarely get much about the history of science itself. But of course "science" is a cultural product with a historical development of its own. Let me give you a rather personal potted history to show what I mean. When I was a kid, in the late 1950s, in the Age of Sputnik, it was quite common to think that what distinguished us from our nearest relatives was in fact our tool kit, with a heavy emphasis not on any old tool but those associated with the hunting of animals or weapons used against other people. By the time I reached university in the 1960s, it was no longer the technology of killing, but peaceful group interaction and co-operation which

had propelled us down the fast lane of evolutionary development. Then the focus shifted again and we began to look at language and symbolic communication. When chimps appeared to learn sign language, this one had to be refined too. Now, it was said only humans had the ability to understand metaphor, had a sense of the past and had an awareness of the self. This gets me up to graduate school. When I began university teaching, we were back to technology again, but with a different twist, for the social and political context which partially determines the content and form of scientific inquiry had shifted again. With the growth of women's studies and feminist ideology, researchers began to speculate about the sexual division of labour. But the focus was not men's hunting but women's gathering activities, and there came the suggestion that the first really important piece of cultural equipment was neither a stone tool nor weapon, but the "shopping bag," probably a netted fibre bag, which women used to gather and transport wild vegetable foods.

Who knows what it will be by the turn of the century. But I hope you see what I mean. SCIENCE--even the word seems to jump out in capital letters. Science is still too often presented as though it were an orderly, natural progression of ideas and inventions.

So could we see some failed inventions, for a change? Or what about some imaginary ones; could we build some of Heath Robinson's wonderful contraptions? And could we, in a Museum of Science and Technology, see the art which machines have inspired, such as Fernand Leger's The Mechanic from 1920? The Leger would of course normally be in the National Gallery which owns it, and with that rather clumsy transition I would like to turn to the National Gallery of Art and see what kinds of things happen when we renegotiate the realities there. Earlier this fall I was speaking to a private collector with a rather good ensemble of African artifacts. He announced, rather forcefully, that he was totally uninterested in their ethnographic aspects; he was only concerned with them as art and he felt my analysis of the same kind of objects from an anthropological point of view rather odd. "After all," he said, "you wouldn't treat Gothic art like that, would you?" Now I actually agree with this man, but in reverse. That is, I think Gothic art should be shown and understood in its ethnographic context; it should be placed in its historic and cultural matrix, understood as ritual objects inspired by religion or more secular artifacts meant to reflect the power and prestige of aristocratic patrons. Such an examination would have to include such varied topics as ideals of feminine beauty in the Middle Ages, the role of trade guilds and the domestic economy of artisans.

Gothic art is art only by metamorphosis.[6] We, through our treatment of what are in reality altar pieces, reliquaries and so forth, through our calling them art, exhibiting them in galleries,

buying them at auction, have transformed these objects into Art. I would like them to be transformed once again into material culture, so that they speak to us of their makers and that society and not so much of our own contemporary aesthetic judgements.

In other words, I am not so interested in traditional art history as I am in the social history of art, art as a social product, as part of a cultural system. That is not to say that a particular object is not created by a specific individual, but even those works which we designate as masterpieces cannot be fully understood, and, I feel, appreciated, out of their social and historical context.

I am not alone in this preference, of course. Janet Wolff, who is a sociology professor at the University of Leeds, writes that "works of art ... are not closed self-contained and transcendent entities, but are the product of specific historical practices on the part of identifiable social groups in given conditions, and therefore bear the imprint of the ideas, values and conditions of existence of those groups, and their representatives in particular artists."[7]

The analysis of art as a social production is not limited, of course, to European art or European art in Canadian collections. Although the cover has been vandalized by the University of Toronto library staff, this is a catalogue for a 1925 show of Canadian art put together by the National Gallery in Ottawa, on request from the Federal Government. It was sent, the second one to go, to Wembley for the British Empire Exhibition. The original show of 1924 was judged to be not only a great popular success but an historic event; for we are told that "Canadian art was then practically unknown in Great Britain."[8]

The exhibition would allow Canada to measure itself against the art of the mother country and that of the other dominions. "That it came out well of the comparison and earned praise from all critical judgment for its qualities of originality, frankness and an indigenous Canadianism, were matters for extreme satisfaction."[9] The same organizers felt that this second show "outclassed the first in every quality of originality and nationalism."[10] I would like to see the exhibition re-constituted and displayed in the original manner in the new gallery, to see what we some 60 years ago defined as the essence of Canadianism. Many of the pieces were oil paintings that, as John Berger tells us, supply "us with our archetypes of artistic genius."[11] And most are landscapes or seascapes. Canadianism is closely aligned, in other words, with its physical setting, a kind of artistic environmental determinism, to be only slightly facetious about it. And it is a very particular environment; most of the landscapes are of Ontario or Quebec, often seen in winter or autumn. Thus we have titles such as Royal Mail Crossing the St. Lawrence in Winter,

Autumn, Ottawa Valley, Snowladen Spruce and so forth. When people or animals are shown they seem to function as icons of Canadianism. Thus we have Moose Crossing a Point, Mounted Indian Fighting, Loon, The Lumberjack and one L'habitant.

How did this happen? After all, the organizers could have chosen more watercolours of botanical specimens, or portraits of Winnipeggers, cityscapes of Vancouver, or sculptures of Toronto's business elite. We need to look here at the institutions which helped determine that selection, both those which were formally in place and those whose functions were latent. The questions such a show should answer include the following: Who becomes an artist? How does he or she achieve this status? How does a work actually reach its public? What is the role of the gatekeepers, the mediators such as museum curators, art critics and dealers who judge our art forms in that process?[12]

Flipping through the catalogue reveals a few startling, if shadowy structures which might go some way toward telling us just who went to Wembley. There were 83 artists in the show for whom only 66 sketchy biographical entries exist. Of these artists, none were born in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan or Prince Edward Island, although 14 were born in the United Kingdom, 13 in Quebec and a staggering 28 in Ontario. Of those who listed by name where they trained, the Ontario College of Art (in Toronto) is by far the most frequently mentioned, followed by the Montreal Art Association. In both shows the same jury of representative Canadian artists selected the particular works to go abroad. I hope you can see from even this superficial glance that the production of art approach would be very fruitful here.

There are many other questions a re-show of the 1925 exhibition could pose as well. What actually happened to these artists and their works? Several, particularly those associated with the Group of Seven, ended up in the National Gallery. But others did not. Has taste changed in the last 60 years? Do not forget that "any aesthetic system is inextricably bound up with a whole series of forces, religious, political, nationalist, economic, intellectual, which may appear to bear only the remotest relation to art, but which may need to be violently disrupted before any change in perception becomes possible."[13] What happened to Mabel Irene Lockerby, who submitted an oil painting of a turkey and a tempera work of a squirrel in the garden? And we should also look at the biography of particular paintings, the life cycle of the object. Which of these works would, in 1987, be sent abroad to represent Canadian art? Finally, has state patronage of the arts led to a kind of official culture, an aesthetic orthodoxy? And if so, what are the consequences, the benefits and the disadvantages of such a situation?

Leaving official art, let us move to the Canadian Museum of Civilization and look more closely at the cultures created by many generations of curators there as they have tried to collect and display the objects associated with Canada's native peoples. I would like to see much more on the interaction between the aboriginal peoples and European settlers in this country, cast in a more revealing light. We have, at least nationally, moved away from the convention of displaying human artifacts directly alongside, as analogous to, natural objects and zoological specimens although in some cases like that of the Geological Survey they were collected by the same people. And most exhibitions do, whether in three-dimensional form or in the text accompanying the material, bring what is called the storyline up to the contact period. But the general impression usually left is that you have glimpsed them in their traditional life ways before any real cultural dislocation. If you think about this it really is a bit odd, for, with the exception of archaeological material, the objects are actually in use and have meaning at the point of interaction between native cultures and wider Canadian society. Here the boundaries between anthropology and history are very obscure. As an example, let me tell you about some Plains Indian artifacts I have been hunting down, sporadically, over the last three years. They were all collected by the Marquis of Lorne, Governor General of Canada from 1878 to 1882. During his tenure in office, he was intimately involved in the events surrounding the arrival of Sitting Bull and several hundred Sioux after their defeat of General Custer at the battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876 and the eventual return of the Indians to American territory after some rather tense negotiations in 1881. Later that year Lorne went on a grand tour of the West. Ignorance about Canada was widespread in the United Kingdom; it was rumoured that the British Admiralty had sent two warships into the Great Lakes carefully equipped with tanks for fresh water. And Lorne felt that a royal tour through the recently acquired prairie lands would provide Canada with a better image and attract the immigrants he felt so necessary if Canada were to achieve her potential. And indeed the tour was widely publicized by the British journalists who accompanied the Governor General at his own expense. The Indians featured prominently in many memorable events on the tour, including treaty discussions and spectacular displays of native dancing. They left vivid, if not uniformly positive, impressions on both Lorne and the journalists.

From Lorne's book Canadian Pictures,, we could look at "An Indian Lodge in the Northwest" with a steamboat in the background. The Victorian Age in Canada's West was the age of the pioneer, whose main task was to replace the wilderness with civilization. These people often saw themselves as creating a human habitat out of the natural environment, which suggested that the Indians were less than fully human. But as Lorne wrote, "The few savage tribes which yet remain in possession of their old

customs and manners do not form ... a prominent feature of even the most unsettled portions of Canada. The talk is not of Indians, but of engines, of the plough, of the self-binder, the reaper and the haycutter."[14] Here also is an illustration of "Indian Hunting Equipment," part of his collection. Lorne was not the only collector in the field that year. "I was provoked the other day to find that one carved stone had been carried off by Americans to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington, and these things are sure to happen until we have some association of our own."[15] Lorne made sure it would not happen again; when he returned home he set about organizing the Royal Society of Canada, which met the first time in 1882.

Lorne liked his Indians the wilder the better. "After the Sioux, the most interesting people now left, and still retaining much of their aboriginal traits and customs, are the Blackfeet."[16] But most of the Indian speeches Lorne heard at pow-wows were "exclamatory beggars' orations." And while he acknowledged that the white man's rifles had killed off the buffalo, he pointed out to the Blackfeet the benefits of agriculture. The "Great Brother-In-Law," as he says he was called, wrote, "Although these Blackfeet had but lately been engaged in hunting parties, some effect could be produced upon them by speaking of the advantages of potato growing."[17]

Lord Lorne, like many observers before him, was horrified by the upheavals in social life brought on by the selling of alcohol to the Indians. And he did not like those Indians who hung around the trading posts. He wrote, "It is natural that the savage virtues should vanish when brought into contact with the manifold vices of civilization."[18] The Indians' appearance and health suffer, suggested Lorne, as they moved from birch bark to stinking hovels of brick and from buffalo robes to the castoff clothing of Europeans. Lorne's collection was meant to illustrate their vanished lifestyle.

And here are a few pieces that I found in the "basement" of the British Museum--actually in their ethnology storehouse out in the east end of London: a Blackfoot warrior's horned headdress, said to be worn both in battle and at dances, hung with ermine skins; a smaller headdress of hawk or owl feathers; the "stand up" headdress with brass buttons, red felt and eagle feathers; a shield, or shield cover actually; and finally a Blackfoot knife sheath with European-inspired floral designs, brass furniture tacks and an "x" at the top as part of traditional Plains cosmology. Lorne wrote, with typical 19th century romanticism, "In a few years no wild Indians will be seen except in the far north; and it is curious to observe them now, while as yet, in some tribes, their dress and habits are what they have been for centuries."[19] Now of course, their dress and life ways had already been greatly affected by European culture at this point. Lorne concluded that their

destiny was to be absorbed by the white races. In fact, part of their destiny was to appear in Lorne's imaginative fiction.

He wrote what by today's standard was a horrible sentimental novel called Love and Peril, published in 1890. It is the story of a white man, a lawyer, who falls in love with a chief's daughter; she has been assigned to him as a guide while he is on a wilderness quest. I will give you just a brief sample. This is the lawyer speaking: "I had misgivings but I manfully suppressed them, as most men do under the circumstances, and I allowed things to happen which, in civilized society, might have been held as compromising. But how could I help it? This dear little maiden, with her quick brown eyes and cheeks of deep nut brown."[20] One day as the Indian girl and the lawyer are standing over a dying deer he has just shot, she whispers, "I love you," and he bends to kiss her. At that moment an arrow pierces her breast and she falls, dying, to the forest floor. It is her spurned Indian lover of course. At first the lawyer is outraged and heartbroken, but on reflection he decides he has had a narrow escape: "I began to think that life with her in the woods would be very tolerable; but then came the recollection of marriages which had been made by white men with Indian demoiselles, and how I had always seen that the man seemed to descend to the woman's level, rather than the woman be elevated to the man's."[21]

The lesson of Love and Peril is clear. Each race should cleave to its own. That is why in his poetry and novels, Lorne idealizes the Noble Savages of the Plains, not the natives of the frontier towns he is helping to create, not the plural society his royal tour was meant to promote. Lorne's ethnographic collection and writings are pieces of Imperial imagination and scientific curiosity materialized. So we need to understand and exhibit these artifacts which Lorne collected, not just as ethnography revealing a traditional way of life, but as representing, as embodying relationships between Indian and white. And we need to try to understand not only the world view of the indigenous peoples but of late Victorian Canadians as well.

In 1878 Lord Lorne was appointed Governor General of Canada in good part because he was married to Queen Victoria's fourth daughter, the Princess Louise. This unhappy couple played a key role in Disraeli's plan to use the Crown as both symbol and instrument in the unification of empire.[22] The presence of royalty in Rideau Hall had Ottawa in the throes of wildest excitement. In the event, Princess Louise's appearances in the capital were rare, but added greatly to what has been called the "secular magic" of the monarchy which reached its apogee in the years between 1877 and 1914.[23] These were the years in which the head of state and her family became surrounded by new popular rituals and invented traditions. Royal ceremonials before this time had been inept, private and of limited appeal, while afterward they were "splendid,

public and popular,"[24] as Queen Victoria and her family became symbols of the nation and the empire to the industrialized masses of a rapidly changing society.

Does all this sound familiar? The Canadian Museum of Civilization could develop a show on the "Queen of Canada" and the evolution of invented traditions, particularly those surrounding the Royal Tour, whether it is undertaken by Lord Lorne or by Andy and Fergie.

I have tried to give you a few examples of exhibitions that might have been; there are also a few museums which might have been. Here we can think not in terms of that rather tired division between arts and science, culture and nature, but in terms of animating some of our contemporary and most enduring self-images. For museums materialize and institutionalize our public myths, the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves.

How about Canada as the True North, Strong and Free?--that is, a museum about Canada as a northern nation? There is no reason, by the way, that national museums always have to be located in the nation's capital. Unless, of course, we talked about Canadian sovereignty and the militarization of the Arctic, I suspect that nobody would get too upset about a Museum of the True North; but what about our myth of multiculturalism, or as the government would now have it, I believe, interculturalism? This would be a museum exploring immigration and those who have come and those who have gone.

Rather than chronologically ordering this museum, we might conceive of it as a series of questions and answers: Why do people come? economic benefit? material gain? religious and political persecution at home? And why do some people come and not others, both in terms of individuals and whole societies. How do they come? We could cover everything from some startling new hypotheses about the Bering Sea land bridge and the original populating of North America to boatloads of Tamils off the Newfoundland coast.

But multiculturalism is not just about "happy peasants" who cross the sea to become good and prosperous Canadians. Ethnicity is not just about Ukrainian Easter eggs and Chinese paper dragons.

So this museum should talk about all those people over the years whom we have kept out, and why, on what grounds. How did it come about, as now seems certain, that Nazi war criminals were knowingly admitted while Jewish victims of fascism were excluded on the spurious grounds that they would not make good farmers? What role have our governments played in this process; what schemes to encourage and discourage immigration have they generated? You might object that such a museum, its collections and exhibitions would be overtly politicized. And so it would be, for of course

the subject matter is by its nature highly political and sensitive, and should be shown to be so unless you just want to opt for a kind of ethnic Disneyland full of success stories and multicultural food kiosks.

Let us move away from subjects sensitive to politicians to those which might disturb a few museum professionals. I think we should do away with the ideal of comprehensive collection policies which seem to me to lead only to more and more boring taxonomies and to storage rooms full of what the public suspects are treasures they will never see. And no more permanent exhibitions, which of course are not really permanent but stay up approximately 20 to 30 years. That is much too long for the ideas embedded in an exhibition to remain unchanged. A series of exhibitions meant to be in place two to five years would keep curators and designers stimulated, put on show a much greater variety of objects and bring to the public the results of museum research, one of the museum's most valuable functions which is often misunderstood or, at worst, unseen by visitors.

Our national museums have done extremely well on the basic questions: "What is that?" "What is the function of this object?" or the equally popular "How old is it?" and, a distant runner-up, "What is it made of?"

But somewhere in the background are all those questions about Why. "Why is this thing here?" "Why did the people who owned it give it up?" Or even, "Why is it on display?"

Traditionally, museums have presented their objects as <u>products,</u> not as representing a process. I believe we must move away from this approach if we are to more fully explore the meaning of the objects that we hold in our national collections. For objects embody relationships: between people, between people and the natural world and supernatural beings, and between social institutions. Objects are surrounded by wonderful webs of performance and ritual. They are also commodities, part of intense and often complex economic transactions. If we think of them only as products, if we examine and display them from this rather static perspective which deals only with function or date, artist or school, species and taxonomy, we are missing what might be thought of as the life cycle of artifacts.

Here come the Zulus again as my example. The African collection of the Royal Ontario Museum has a lot of Zulu spears and shields. They became available on the ethnographic market after the eventual pacification of the Zulu, through auctions and participants' battlefield collections. And it is here that we need to think about the contextualization of objects--how an artifact, whether it is a Gothic altar piece, a dairy creamer, a stuffed grizzly bear or a Zulu spear, takes on different meanings which are

partly determined by its setting and expressed through its display in particular ways. Imagine a comfortable gentleman's sitting room in a prosperous home of 1910. We might see a sporting print or two on the walls, a desk, lamp, armchair and a Zulu shield, a knobkerrie and a couple of crossed assegais over the mantel above the fireplace. They have been transformed from African weapons into war trophies and finally decorative art, when carefully displayed, according to the conventions of European design, in a Canadian home. And, of course, any museum exhibition is itself a kind of recontextualization, one which should reveal how artifacts can be multi-referential, which should reveal "the social life of things."

I am not sure why we so rarely see this in our museums; possibly we just need to be more reflexive about what we do. And that is not easy to do. As participating members in a living culture, we are not given over to systematic analysis of what we're doing and why, while we are doing it.

But I think a reflexive sense of self, a critical approach to what we do, is very necessary if, and please forgive the cliche, we are to know where we have been and where we are going. And that is why in closing I would like to end tonight with a very serious proposal for what I think would be a wonderfully fun museum, one which would help us understand our lives in the present, a Museum of Popular Culture.

Leave aside for the moment those definitional problems of just what is popular culture. How would you generate a collections policy for a collection which would quickly overrun its site, since popular culture is not only often mass-produced but changing momentarily? Let us not be distracted by the new research methodologies which would have to be put in place. Or how we would distinguish what is Canadian popular culture? What about those black plastic argillite Indian totem poles sold in the Vancouver airport but made in the Far East? Ignore the conservator's questions of how best to preserve contemporary ephemera, made to be discarded or even biodegradable.

That is not to say there won't be really tough territorial negotiations here. Who will collect the Bryan Adams rock videos; who will do the symbolic analysis of the Parachute Club?

I do not think anthropology is just something to be practised on the "natives" out there somewhere, and museology cannot forever be marooned in the past. The insights and methodological strategies we have generated in studying the Past and the Ethnographic Other can and should be put to work in the service of a much better understanding and analysis of our own society. And so I propose a Museum of Popular Culture, one which features our most cherished national icons: maybe the red-coated Mountie, with

or without his wonder dog "Cuddles," or a couple of sturdy voyageurs paddling forever upstream in search of my favourite key symbol and national icon, the beaver.

I have at times this evening been somewhat critical of our national museums. And they do have a particularly heavy and public burden to bear by their very designation as the keepers of those objects that we choose as the essence of our collective identity. But I hope that you feel, as I do, that Canada has been well served by her national museums and the realities they have negotiated for us, for they are some of our most crucial and critically situated institutions in helping us understand what Kierkegaard called, quite simply, the nature of things and the meaning of life.

---

1. National Museums of Canada, Exploring Space and Technology in Canada (Ottawa: National Museum of Science and Technology, n.d.), p.20.

2. Michael Ames, Museums, The Public and Anthropology (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986).

3. James Morris, Heaven's Command: An Imperial Progress (New York: Penguin Books, 1979).

4. Morris, op.cit. p.433.

5. Turner, 1967.

6. Jacques Maquet, "Art by Metamorphosis," African Arts XII(4, 1979): pp. 32-36, 90-91.

7. Janet Wolff, The Social Production of Art (London: Macmillan, 1981), p. 49.

8. National Museums, Exploring, p.3.

9. Ibid, p.3.

10. Ibid, p.3.

11. John Berger, Ways of Seeing (London: British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books, 1972), p.84.

12. Wolff, op.cit.

13. Francis Haskell, Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 23.

14. Marquis of Lorne (Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell), Canadian Pictures (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1885), p.171.

15. Marquis of Lorne (Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell; writing as Duke of Argyll), Passages From the Past (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1907), p.473.

16. Marquis of Lorne, Canadian Pictures, p.162.

17. Ibid, p. 164.

18. Ibid, p. 172.

19. Ibid, p. 157.

20. Marquis of Lorne (Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell), "Love and Peril," in Three Notable Short Stories (London: Spencer Blackett, 1890), p.34.

21. Ibid, p. 46.

22. R.H. Hubbard, "Viceregal Influences on Canadian Society," in W.L. Morton, ed., The Shield of Achilles (Toronto: University of Waterloo, 1968).

23. David Carradine, "The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition,' c. 1820-1977," in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

24. Ibid, p.120.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Ames, Michael
1986 Museums, The Public and Anthropology. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Auger, Michel C.
1988 "Pour $60 millions le Musée des beaux-arts double sa superficie et respecte les édifices environnants" dans Le Devoir, 26 fevrier, p. 3.

Baird, D.M.
"The National Museum of Science and Technology," Science Affairs 5:4 pp.

Berger, Carl
1983 Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto.

Berger, John
1972 Ways of Seeing. London: British Broadcasting Corporation and Penguin Books.

Bissell, C.
1982 The Massey Report and Canadian Culture. Ottawa: Carleton University Information Office.

1986 The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Boggs, Jean Sutherland
1971 The National Gallery of Canada. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Boulizon, Guy
1976 Les musées du Québec Montréal: Fides. Tome I: Montréal et l'ouest du Québec. Tome II: La vieille capitale et l'est du Québec.

Bovey, P., David Barr, Gregg Finley, John Vollmer
1986 "Being a curator is the most impossible profession on earth!" Muse 3:4, pp. 15-18.

Brock, R.W.
1910 Summary Report of the Geological Survey of Canada for 1910. Montreal: The Geological Survey of Canada.

Brown, F. Maud
1964 Breaking Barriers: Eric Brown and the National Gallery. [Ottawa]: Society for Art Publications.

Burns, W.A.
1971 "The Curator-as-Canary. Curator XIV:3 pp.

Carradine, David
1983 "The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the 'Invention of Tradition,' c. 1820-1977." In Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cannizzo, Jeanne
1982 Old Images/New Metaphors: The Museum in the Modern World. Montreal: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Transcripts.

1987 Living in the Past. Montreal: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Transcripts.

n.d. "Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: The Geological Survey and the Indians of Canada." Unpublished manuscript.

Chartrand, H.H.
1984 An Economic Impact Assessment of the Canadian Fine Arts (Arts Research monograph presented at the Third International Conference on Cultural Economics and Planning, Akron, Ohio.

Chartrand, Luc, Raymond Duchesne et Yves Gingras,
1987 Histoire des sciences au Québec. Montréal: Les Editions du Boréal.

Colbert, E.H.
1958 "On Being a Curator." Curator 1:1.

Cole, Douglas
1985 Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Collins, W.H.
1927 The National Museum of Canada. Annual Report for 1926. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

Commission canadienne de l'Unesco,
1987 Bulletin de la Commission canadienne del'Unesco. no 7, pp. 1-5.

Continuité
1984 La muséologie nouvelle. Dossier thématique, no. 23.

Crean, Susan
1976 Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?. Don Mills Ont.: General Publishing.

Crête, Florian V.
1945 "Les musées et leur rôle en éducation" dans le Rapport Annuel de la Société Provancher d'Histoire Naturelle du Canada. Québec.

Currelly, C.T.
1956 I Brought the Ages Home. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum.

Dagenais, Angèle
1987 "Le nouveau Musée d'art contemporain coûtera $30 millions" dans Le Devoir, 13 avril, p. 11.

"Le Musée de la civilisation ouvre ses portes ce week-end" dans Le Devoir, 6 octobre, p. 13.

"Petit musée deviendra grand" dans Le Devoir, 21 novembre.

Daigle, Marie-Carole
1986 "Le Musée du Commerce et de l'Industrie de Montréal 1916-1956, dans Musées, 9:2 p.10.

Department of Communications,
1982 Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. Ottawa: Department of Communications.

1982 Summary of Briefs and Hearings. Ottawa: Department of Communications.

1985 An Overview of Cultural Initiatives Programmes, 1980-1985 Ottawa: Department of Communications.

Le Devoir
1987 "Lise Bacon libère $21 millions pour le Musée du Québec", 16 octobre.

1988 "Les trifluviens réclament leur Musée de la tradition", 2 mars.

Dickenson, Victoria
1984 "On the Arrangement of Museums, 1600-1919: An Investigation into the Ordering of Collections" Museum Assistance Program, Fellowship Program Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

Dickson, Lovat
1986 The Museum Makers. The Story of the Royal Ontario Museum. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum.

Drouin, Oscar
1941 Bibliothèques et Musées 1938. Quebec: Bureau des statistiques, ministères des Affaires municipales, de l'Industrie et du Commerce.

Drummond, I., R. Bothwell and J. English,
1981 Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Dunn, P., Akers, A., Brodsky, A., and Rymland, L.
1987 Electronic Dreamtime and Vernacular TV: A Rationale for a Planetary Television Network. California: International Synergy Institute.

Ecco, Umberto
1985 La guerre du faux. Paris: Gnasset.

Finkielkraut, Alain
1985 "La défaite de Goethe", dans Le passé et son avenir, Paris: Gallimard.

Fox, Cyril
1932 A Survey of McGill University Museums, Montréal: McGill University.

Geertz, Clifford
1973 "Ideology as a Cultural System." In The Interpretation of Culture. New York: Basic Books.

Gilson, Etienne
1957 Painting and Reality. Meridian.

Grenier, Louise
1987 Le Musée McCord: histoire d'un musée universitaire, travail de session pour le cours "Histoire et fonctions des musées" dans le cadre de la maitrise en muséologie, Université de Montréal.

Guédon, Jean-Claude
1986 "La Maison des sciences et des techniques de Montréal", dans Museum, no. 150, pp.133-136

Hadjinicolaou, N.
1979 Art History and Class Struggle. London: Pluto Press.

Haskell, Francis
1976 Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Heidegger, M.
n.d. Sein und Zeit. Adlers Foreign Books.

Helwig, David
1980 Love and Money: The Politics of Culture. Ottawa: Oberon Press.

Hinsley, C.M., Jr.
1981 Savages and Scientists: The Smithsonian Institution and the Development of American Anthropology 1846-1910. Washington: Smithsonian.

Horne, Donald
1984 The Great Museum. London: Pluto Press.

Huard, Victor-Alphonse
1926 La vie et l'oeuvre de l'Abbé Provancher. Québec: Librairie J-P. Garneau.

Hubbard, R.H.
1968 "Viceregal Influences on Canadian Society." In W.L. Morton, ed. The Shield of Achilles. Toronto: University of Toronto.

Kelly, Robert F.
1984 "Museums as Status Symbols II: Attaining a State of Having Been," reprinted from Advances in Non-Profit Marketing, ed. R Belk, Grennwich Conn.: JAI Press.

n.d. Culture as Commodity: The Marketing of Cultural Objects and Cultural Experiences. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.

n.d. "Tourism Master Plan." Internal document. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Key, Archie F.
1973 Beyond Four Walls: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums. Toronto: McClellan and Stewart.

Knowles, Malcolm S.
1981 "Andragogy." In Museums, Adults and The Humanities, A Guide for Educational Programming. Washington, D.C: American Association of Museums.

Kuhn, Thomas
1970 La structure de la révolution scientifique. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

La Haye, Jean Claude
1986 "Une institution présente dans son milieu et ouverte sur le monde. La Maison des sciences et des techniques", dans Musées, 9:2 pp.5-7

L'Allier, Jean-Paul
1976 Pour l'évolution de la politique culturelle, Document de travail, Québec, ministére des Affaires culturelles.

La politique québécoise du développement culturel. Québec: Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1978, vol. 2.

Leduc, Pierre
1963 Les origines et de développement de l'Art Association de Montréal (1860-1912), mémoire de maitrise, Montréal: Université de Montréal.

Lepage, Jocelyne
1987 "Un musée à la mesure de Phyllis Lambert" dans La Presse, 5 décembre.

Lorne, Marquis of (Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell)
1885 Canadian Pictures. London: The Religious Tract Society.

1890 "Love and Peril." In Three Notable Stories. London: Spencer Blackett.

1907 (as the Duke of Argyll) Passages From The Past. London: Hutchinson & Co.

Lussato, Bruno
1986 Bouillon de culture. Paris: Laffont,

MacDonald, Flora
1987 Notes for a speech by the Honourable Flora MacDonald, M.P. for Kingston and the Islands, Minister of Communications. Public lecture series Towards the 21st Century: New Directions For Canada's National Museums, Ottawa, 22 September 1987.

MacDonald, George F.
1986 "The Future of Museums in the Global Village." Internal document. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

1987 "EPCOT Centre in Museological Perspective." Paper presented at the Canadian Museum Association Annual Conference, Ottawa.

1987 "Museums--Facing the Competition." Paper presented at the Canadian Museum Association Annual Conference, Ottawa.

MacNutt, W.S.
1955 Days of Lorne. Fredericton: Brunswick Press.

Malraux, André
1953 The Voices of Silence, trans. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Doubleday.

Maquet, Jacques
1979 "Art by Metamorphosis," African Arts XII:4 pp. 32-36, 90-91.

Massey, Vincent
1963 What's Past is Prologue: The Memoires of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, C.H. Toronto: McMillan.

Miers H. and S.F. Markham,
1932 Report on the Museums of Canadian. To the Carnagie Corporation of New York . Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable Ltd.

Millennium: Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World" Television Series, Washington, D.C: Adrian Mole Productions.

Ministère des Affaires culturelles, Québec
1979 Le Musée du Québec et son avenir. Programme muséologique. Québec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles.

Le Musée du Québec en devenir. Concept muséologique. Québec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles.

Musées et muséologie: nouvelles perspectives. Une hypothèse de travail du ministère des Affaires culturelles. Québec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles.

1980 Rapport final du groupe de travail sur les musées scientifiques. Québec: Ministère des Affaires culturelles.

Montpetit, Raymond
1986 "Du musée des connaisseurs à celui des spectateurs, dans Acts du colloque Musée et éducation: modèles didactique d'utilisation des musées. Montréal, Société des musées québécois, pp. 56-58.

Morris, James
1979 Heaven's Command: An Imperial Progress. New York: Penguin Books.

Musées
1985 Musées et nouvelle muséologie, numero thématique vol. 8.

National Gallery of Canada
Sixth Annual Review of the National Gallery of Canada 1973-1974. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada.

National Museums of Canada
1977 Places of Discovery, 1972-1979: Highlights from the first five years of the National Museums Policy Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

1981 A National Museums Policy for the 80's. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

1989 Towards a National Museum Policy for Canada (Draft working documents for discussion purposes, January 1989), representing the results of the various "Search Conferences" conducted during the summer of 1985.

National Museum of Science and Technology,
n.d. Exploring Science and Technology in Canada. Ottawa: National Museum of Science and Technology.

1971 "A Vital Museum of Science and Technology" Report to the Board of Trustees. Internal document.

1987 Communications and Space Business Plan. Internal document.

1987 Conservation Policy. Internal document.

Neatby, Hilda
1953 So Little for the Mind. Toronto: Clark Irwin.

1983 So Much To Do, So Little Time: The Writings of Hilda Neatby. Edited and annotated by M. Haydon. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Nye, Russell B.
1981 "The Humanities and the Museum: Definitions and Connections." In Museums, Adults and the Humanities: A Guide for Educational Programming. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums.

Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture
1987 Ontario Heritage Policy Review--Giving Our Past a Future. Toronto: Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture in co-operation with the Ontario Heritage Foundation.

Ostry, B.
1978 The Cultural Connection: An Essay on Culture and Government Policy in Canada. Toronto: McClelland.

Pepall, Rosalind M.,
1986 Construction d'un musée Beaux-Arts, Montréal 1912. Montréal: Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal.

Phillips, Carol
1985 "Missing in Action," Muse 3:3.

Porter, John R.
1977 "Un projet de musée national à l'époque du peintre Joseph Légaré (1833-1835)" dans Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française, 31:1.

Porter, John R., Nicole Cloutier et Jean Trudel,
1978 Joseph Légaré 1795-1855, Ottawa: Galerie nationale du Canada.

Rivard, R.
1984 Opening Up the Museum or Toward a New Museology: Ecomuseums and "Open" Museums. Québec.

Russell, Loris S.
1961 The National Museum of Canada, 1910-1960. Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources.

Safdie, Moshe
1984 "Design Statement (1983)," in A New Building for the National Gallery of Canada (pamphlet) Ottawa: Canada Museums Corporation.

Schafer, R. Murray
1986 "The Theatre of Conference II," Canadian Theatre Review, CTR 47.

Schneider, William
1977 "Race and Empire: The Rise of Popular Ethnography in the late Nineteenth Century," Journal of Popular Culture XI: 98-109.

Sheppard, Gordon
1965 A Special Report on the Cultural Policy and Activities of the Government of Canada, v.1-4 Ottawa.

Stewart, Roderick
1973 Bethune. Toronto: PaperJacks.

Taylor, C.J.
1986 "National Historic Parks and Sites, 1880-1951: The Biography of A Federal Cultural Program" Unpublished PhD thesis, Ottawa:Department of History, Carleton University.

Tessier, Marc
1986 "Les musées de demain" dans Continuité, no. 32\33, pp. 47-50.

Toupin, Jacques
1978 "Le Musée d'Art de Joliette, dans Muséo-Vision, 2:1, pp. 1-3.

Trudel, Jean
1984 Le réseau des musées de la Beauce., Société du patrimoine des beaucerons, janvier.

1987 "De grandes attentes, mais quelles attentes?" Muse. 5:3, pp. 70-71

White, Hayden
1976 "The Noble Savage: Theme as Fetish." In Fredi Chiappelli, ed. First Images of America, v.I. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wolff, Janet
1981 The Social Production of Art. London: Macmillan.

Woodcock, George
1985 Strange Bedfellows: The State and the Arts in Canada. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre.

Youngblood, Gene
n.d. "Virtual Space: The Electronic Environments of Mobile Image.' unpublished manuscript.

Zeller, Suzanne
1987 Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

With the approach of the 21st century, Canada's national museums have embarked on a new era. The construction of buildings to showcase three of the national collections; the reevaluation of the federal role in the national museum community; and the challenge of modern technology and of increased audience expectations has resulted in new approaches to traditional museum functions. This volume presents the views of the Minister, Directors and staff actively involved in planning and developing new programs, along with commentary and analysis offered by scholars in the museum community. It records the intellectual processes, debates and visions of the people who set new directions for Canada's national museums.

En approchant du 21e siècle, les musées nationaux du Canada marquent une ère nouvelle. La construction de nouveaux édifices, la présentation de trois collections nationales, la réévaluation du rôle du gouvernement fédéral dans la communauté muséologique canadienne, le progrès de la technologie moderne et les demandes du public ont changé les fonctions muséologiques traditionnelles. Cette publication présente les points de vue du ministre, des directeurs de musées et du personnel-clé qui sont tous impliqués dans la planification et l'évaluation de nouveaux programmes. S'ajoutent des commentaires et des analyses suggérés par des muséologues. Il s'agit d'un dossier sur les débats qui ont cours parmi les responsables de l'orientation des musées nationaux du Canada et sur les principes auxquels ils se réfèrent.

ISBN 0-660-50292-5

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION
MUSÉE CANADIEN DES CIVILISATIONS